

R E S T  
FOR THE  
HEAVY-LADEN.

PROMISED

By our only Lord and Saviour

**Jesus Christ**

TO ALL

*SINCERE BELIEVERS,*

Practically Discoursed upon.

---

By Clement *Ellis* Rector of Kirkby in  
Nottinghamshire.

Authour of the *Gentile Sinner*.

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HEB R. 4. 1. *Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.*

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TO THE  
*Right Reverend Father in God*  
**THOMAS**  
Lord Bishop of  
**LINCOLN.**

Right Reverend, and my very good Lord,

**T**Hankfulness to our *Benefactors* is certainly a great duty, which we owe both to *God* and *them*; and to express the same, as we are able, is a part of that duty. To do this as well as we can, even when we are sensible we cannot do it as well as it were fit to be done, though it may have something of *faultiness* in it; yet if it be not both

the Epistle Dedicatory.

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pardonable and acceptable, we must let alone for ever all expressions of this kind even to God himself. Though I am not able to shew my *gratitude* in any thing suitable to *your Lordship's* great *goodness* and *bounty*, yet am I bold to tender to Your acceptance this poor *present*; because it is all that I have now in readiness, and I dare not stay for better, lest *death* prevent me, and I want a fitter opportunity of telling the world (as I think my self bound that, if I be able to do any good in it, after *God*, I owe very much of it to *your Lordship's* *bounty*, *countenance*, *instruction* and *example*: none of which I ever wanted (the more is now my shame when I reflect upon my slender proficience under such a *Patron*) whilst I had my education under *your* eye and government in *Queen's Colledge* in *Oxford*. And as *your* goodness was not then confined to one (though not a little magni-

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

magnified by the *undeservingness* of that *one*) but all that needed it shamed largely in it: so neither did your singular goodness to my self feed me there onely, but hath followed me into the *Country*, and extended it self to my *children*; so that I cannot now be unthankfull to Your *Lordship*, but the very fruit of my loins must witness against me.

Having made this due acknowledgment of Your *Lordship*'s special favours to me and mine, I must not dare to go any higher, but must leave the task of saying how much not onely the *Church of England*, but all her *Sisters* of the *Reformation* are beholden to Your *Lordship*'s pious and learned labours, and exemplary zeal for the *Protestant Religion*, to others who are better able both to judge and speak. It shall be my businels (whilst I live) to praise the *God* for the blessings he is pleased to bestow upon us by the hands of our

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*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

*Ghostly Fathers, and to pray that our  
sins may never come to that height  
as to provoke him to withdraw this  
mercy from us.*

*My Lord, I most heartily beseech  
the great *Shepherd* and *Bishop* of our  
*Souls* to give his blessing both to your  
*Person* and your *Labours*; and to  
grant that after you have comforta-  
bly to your self and profitably to  
others finished your course, as a  
*glorious light* to his *Church* on earth  
you may receive the *Crown of Right-  
eousness* in heaven.*

*Your Lordship's  
Most obliged and very  
Humble Servant,*

**C L. ELIS**

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TO THE  
READERS.

WHEN the charitable Samari-  
tan had found the poor man  
lying wounded by the way side, and  
ready to die for want of present help:  
his compassion might possibly have  
come too late had it staid for ceremony.  
Had he spent his breath in  
prefatory complements, and trifled a-  
way the time to usher in his kindness  
with many fine words; had he stood  
excusing his boldness or his too much  
officiousness, apologizing for his weak-  
ness, or with a great deal of Rhetor-  
ick courting the poor dying soul to  
accept of life: however we (who know

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better how to talk than to doe good) might now call him Modish, He that so much needed his help would have thought him idle and impertinent, and more a courtier, than a friend, that durst not do him good till he had begged his leave to doe it. But he did the part of a true friend. His eye no sooner saw, but his heart pitied and pity set him a work. To bind up his wounds, to pour in Oyl and Wine, to accommodate him with his own beast, and a convenient lodging, and to provide for his cure at his own charge were things so needfull and so pious as to be their own both warrant and commendation.

The design of this following discourse is to doe the like good office to Men's Souls, as he did to the poor Man's Body. These have fallen among Thieves too, by wham they have been stripped and wounded : and the good Samaritan that alone can both cloath and heal them is no other but JESUS CHRIST

## To the Reader.

CHRIST, the Saviour of the world, who came on purpose to seek and to save that which was lost. This he can do immediately by himself, but this he doth ordinarily by his instruments whom he hath ordained to Minister unto him in the cure of Souls : and by their Ministry he poureth both the Oyl and the Wine into the Soul that's wounded either by sin or for it. In this needfull office I desire to serve him, and to doe what good I am able to all that need it ; and had rather be doing than apologizing for what I do ; or like a Mountebank, telling the world what feats I am able or hope to perform. So that, if the Bookseller had not more than I, desired to be in the fashion, I had not troubled you with one word by way of Preface.

If the Book, answer the Title, and shew indeed where the heavy laden may find rest, the Title doth sufficiently commend the Book. Whatever it be that is here done, now that I have offered

To the Reader.

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offered it to your view, I must leave it to your judgment whether I will or no. And I do expect, that every one will judge of it as he is affected; and judge as you please, I am not concerned in for my own credit, nor any otherwise than he, who having made the best Provision he was able for the entertainment of his friends, seeth but few of them eat heartily, and all the rest too nice and dainty to taste of any thing he hath set before them, and some of them deriding the homely fare. His design was friendship, and if it be otherwise taken, he is sorry for it; but satisfieth himself with this, that he cannot help it.

How little need soever there may be of such helps as this in other parts to of the world; I cannot chuse but see them in this little corner of it, which lieth under my eye, a great many of them that would be called Christians who are sufficiently need what I here have endeavoured to doe for them. I cannot but

## To the Reader.

but pity them, and how can I do so, and not afford them my best assistance, in pointing them out the way to Him who so lovingly invites them, and hath in readiness for them all that they can need or desire ? If any of them will not accept of my kindness, the worst that I wish them is this, that they may not however lose the benefit of that free and gracious invitation which is herein commended unto them. It is the blessed J E S U S who shed his precious Bloud to redeem our Souls from death that here invites to rest and life and happiness ; I am no more but the unworthiest of those his Servants, who, at his command, bid men to the feast, and say what he hath enabled them to perswade them to come, and direct them in the way.

What you are to expect in this discourse, the Contents will tell you ; and all that I shall now tell you more is onely this, that I cannot wish myself any surer of rest and happiness, than

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## To the Reader.

I am confident I have pointed out unto you the right way to it. As many as you as desire to be good and safe will love and pray for him that doth his best to make you so, and will heartily joyn with him in this Prayer to the great God of all true Peace and Comfort, that he would enable us all by his holy Spirit to go on constantly and cheerfully running the race that is set before us, till we obtain the end of our faith, even the Salvation of our Souls through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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# Rest for the Heavy-laden.

M A T T. XI. 28.

*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.*

## The INTRODUCTION.

**I**F we sinners were but half so sensible of our miserable condition by nature, and of that *heavy load* of sin which lieth upon our souls, as our most gracious JESUS is ready and willing to ease us of it; there would be no need of any arguments to persuade us, with all earnestness of mind, to attend unto these words now read unto us: seeing they bring in them so obliging an invitation from the *Lord of life*.

life and *God* of all comforts, to every  
of us, without exception, to accept  
that very mercy and grace which  
most need ; together with a very go  
assurance, that we shall not go with  
them, if we will but be at that reason  
able pains, to *come* for them.

As loving and gracious, as sweeta  
endearing, as free and undeserved,  
comfortable and seasonable a grace a  
favour, as that great and good *God*, w  
is all love and fullness could condesc  
to offer us, or *we*, who seem to be en  
made up of wants and miseries, conden  
reasonably wish or desire. Which if  
can once be brought rightly to unde  
stand, we may therein learn both o Sav  
duty and our *happiness* ; all that *G*  
expecteth from *us*, and all that we a  
to hope for from *Him* : And which the  
gain if we can be perswaded thankfu  
to embrace, we shall in so doing acce  
tably perform what we are obliged  
do, be happily freed from all that *lab*  
should most fear to suffer, and mu  
henceforward live in a comfortable  
pectation of all that *God* hath promis  
and we can reasonably wish hereaffor  
to enjoy, even that blessed *End of* *the*  
*faith*

faith, even the salvation of our souls. Pet. 1.9. That End, which we have all the reason in the world to long and labour for, and those means which we go are obliged to use, if we would obtain that end, are both summarily comprised in this Verse. Which that we may more clearly discern, let us observe these five things.

1. Who they are, to whom this Invitation is given: And we shall find them to be all such as are *laden*, that is, all sinners.

2. Who it is, unto whom all these laden persons, or sinners are invited. *Unto Me, that is, unto him who here inviteth them, even CHRIST JESUS the Saviour of sinners.*

3. What the duty is, which he calleth upon them to do, that they may reap the benefit of his Invitation. *To come unto him, that is, to believe in him.*

4. What are the qualifications, which may fit them for coming. They must labour and be Heavy laden: that is, they must feel the weight of their sins, and be weary of them.

5. What that is, unto the enjoyment whereof they are invited. *CHRIST will*

*will give them rest, that is, he will freely bestow upon them all happiness.*

We are then so to understand these few words, as if Christ had expressed himself more largely to us, to this purpose.

You to whom I now speak, yea, and all others as well as you, howsoever you may think of your self good, must know, that you are sinners; and that to be a sinner is not so light a matter as many among you take it to be. The Sin is like a heavy load, which, whether he that carryeth it be at present sensible of it or no, will certainly make him to know it to his sorrow in the end, if he be not happily eased of it in due time. As you are not able to bear it but to your own destruction; so neither are you able to save yourselves to throw it off. I therefore freely offer you a very sensible mercy, and be not so much your own enemies as to refuse it. I am coming into the world on purpose to be your Saviour, and to ease you of that dead load. Lo, I now proclaim to you and to all the world this my gracious design and my readiness to do that for you which you cannot do for your selves.

which

which all the angels in heaven are not  
able to do for you, nor any other either  
in heaven or earth but onely I, who  
am ordained of the *Father* to be the Sa-  
aviour of sinners. Come ye therefore  
unto me at my call; yea, every one  
that will let him come; there shall be  
nothing wanting on my part to do you  
good. If you account your sins a *burden*  
to you, if they begin to seem heavy and  
uneasie to you, if you labour under  
them and grow weary of them, and  
have a desire to be freed from them,  
you will not delay, but come, now you  
know of one that is both able and willing  
to ease you of your load. I now give  
you timely notice both of the danger  
you are in, and of the onely way to  
safety: take heed therefore to your  
selves, and beware how you either pre-  
sume to go on yet securely as though  
you were in no danger at all of perish-  
ing, or how you sit down under your  
burden despairing of ease, or how you  
seek out any other way for that ease  
which you find wanting. But trust to  
me onely, and take that course which I  
direct you to. Let nothing hinder or  
discourage you from coming as readily  
unto

*True*

unto me, as you are invited freely.  
 Fear not the greatness or the number of  
 your sins whereof you are or have been  
 guilty, doubt not of my ability or willing-  
 ness to deliver you from them all.  
 Be but truly humbled under the sense  
 of them, and heartily desirous to be  
 eased of them, and sincerely willing to  
 be ruled by me, and firmly believing  
 will be full as good as my word, and  
 you shall be sure of all you come for.  
 the Father hath *put all things into my*  
*hand*, Joh. 3. 35. and to whomsoever  
 will, I give pardon and peace, grace  
 and glory, and everlasting rest  
 heaven.

P A R T

## P A R T I.

THIS being the plain sense and meaning of the words, let us now learn from them, *first*, what we can for the information of our understandings whether in matter of faith or practice: and, *secondly*, be perswaded by the arguments in them to accept of that love and mercy which are so freely offered unto us.

1. For the information of our understanding in matter both of Faith and Practice, we shall lay down these seaven Propositions.

1. *We ought so to account of sin, as of an heavy load or grievous burden.*

2. *We are all of us, none excepted, laden with this heavy burden of sin.*

3. *JESUS CHRIST, and he alone, can ease us of this load of sin.*

4. *All sinners are freely invited by CHRIST to come unto him for ease.*

5. *No man shall have ease by Christ but only he that cometh to him.*

6. *He that cometh unto Christ, must be sensible of the weight of sin, and desirous to be eased of it.*

7. *All they that come unto Christ with an unfeigned desire to be eased of sin, shall have rest.*

All these are things which it very nearly concerneth us all clearly to understand, and very seriously to consider, as we are sinners and hope for mercy at God's hands. If we do not well understand the nature of *sin* and the evil that is in it, we shall never be brought to a due hatred of it, and so must needs fail in the great and necessary duty of *repentance*. If we do not know our selves to be *sinners*, though we should conceive some kind of hatred of sin, yet can we not repent whilst we think not our selves guilty, nor be brought to that degree of *humility* which must prepare us for *mercy*; nor be so apprehensive of our danger as to be desirous of a *Saviour*. If we know not *Jesus* to be our onely *Saviour*, though we know both our selves to be sinners, and our sins to be deadly, yet is our case but like that of a man who is sick of a mortal disease and knoweth not a *Physician* that can cure him, either

he despaireth of life, or he hopeth without cause that he may recover and live, or he trusts his life to a Physician that can do him no good; and which soever he doth, all comes to one thing, he *dies*: so is it with him that knoweth not *CHRIST* to be the onely Physician of his soul. If we think that *Christ*'s invitation is not universal to all sinners, but that some are excepted, whom he doth not invite to come unto him for mercy, we shall be apt to trouble our selves with vain fears and doubts that we are of the number of those that are excepted, and the more humble we are made by a sense of our own vileness, the more will such fears and doubts grow upon us, and the fitter we are for mercy; the more disconsolate will our condition be, and our very religion will be our burden, and we shall not be able to praise God, nor to serve him with any chearfulness of heart. If we should suppose that *Christ* would save any that do not come unto him, or should mistake this coming to *Christ*, and think it to be another thing than really it is, we would by a vain presumption destroy our selves, and imagining falsely that we are already safe

enough, woul'd no longer be sollicitous about the means of safety, but securely run upon our own ruine. And he that can perswade himself that either he is come to *Christ*, or that *Christ* will give him rest, whilst he is not sensible of the burden of sin, neither desirous in good earnest to be freed from sin as a most loathsome thing, doth but miserably deceive himself into vain hopes of a pardon without due humiliation. *Lastly*, If we do not well understand the nature of that rest which *Christ* promiseth, and after what manner he giveth it to those that come unto him, what kind of rest he giveth in this life, and what in the life to come; we shall not seek it or value it so as it deserveth, neither shall we be duly sensible of, or thankfull for so much of it as now he giveth, nor take that pains, as is requisite, to be fitted for that which is yet behind. These things therefore being so necessary to be well understood both for our present comfort and future happiness, let us in good earnest apply our selves to the learning of them.

## C H A P. I.

## S E C T. I.

THE first thing we are to learn, is to account of sin, as of an heavy load or grievous burden. And this we may learn from the word of God wherein we find sin so called : as Gal. 6. 5. it is said *Every man shall bear his own burden*, or the weight of his own sin. And St. Paul speaking of some silly women that became a prey to seducers, 2 Tim. 3. 6. he calls them *women laden with sins*. In like manner the Prophet Isaiah complaining of rebellious *Judah*, Isa. 1. 4. thus expresseth himself — *Ab sinfull nation, a people laden with iniquity*. Hence David being sensible of his sins, thus crieth out of the weight of them, Psal. 38. 3, 4. *There is no rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over my head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.*

It would be but a vain curiosity to enquire how the comparison betwixt *sin*

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and a *load* or *burden* would hold in all particulars. The *Holy Ghost* maketh use of such similitudes onely to make us understand the evil of sin in some respects, and not in every thing that belongs unto it. A burden loadeth a man and lieth heavy upon him, it is uneasie and troublesome, and the weight of it may be such as not onely to hinder his motion and make it hard and painfull to him to move under it, but also to lame him and press him to death. Such a thing will sin be found when we have rightly considered it. We shall consider it at present with a threefold respect : *first*, to *God* against whom it is : *secondly*, to the world : and *lastly*, to us men whot it is. And whether we regard sin as it is a disease and pollution, or as it is a transgression and a guilt, it will be found a burden and a grievance.

§. II. 1. In considering the nature of sin, we must needs have an eye to *God* in the *first* place, all sin being a disagreeableness of our persons or actions to the will of *God*. Now though sin cannot properly be a burden to *God*, who cannot suffer any thing, or feel any evil to himself

himself by it, we can neither profit nor hurt God by any thing we do: Yet God to express his dislike of it is pleased to use such phrases of speech as we do when we complain of what is burdensome to us. Thus saith God (if that be the right reading) Amos 2. 13. *Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.* So Mal. 2. 17. *Ye have wearied me with your words.* And Isa. 43. 24. *Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.* First, as sin is uncleanness and pollution and a filthy disease, how odious must it needs be to God? It is contrary to the absolute goodness and purity of his nature, *He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity.* Habak. 1. 13. It is a corrupting what God had made sound, a poisoning what he had made wholesome, a deforming what he had made beautifull, a depraving what he had made very good; It is a blotting of the holy *Image of God,* it is a debasing of his creatures to the service and drudgery of the *devil* and *lust.* How should God endure to see his works thus abused, and the beauty and goodness of his creatures thus marred

wherein he would be seen and loved and praised and glorified ? How should God endure to find that gracious design of his, of communicating still more and more of his goodness to his creatures thus obstructed ? Sin upon this account must needs be very odious to him, and a burden or grievance. *Secondly*, as it is a *transgression* of his law , what can be more abominable ? It is a robbing God of that which is his own, and a bestowing it upon his enemy ; it is a disowning or slighting of his sovereign power and authority , and refusing obedience to his command ; it is a preferring ourselves and other creatures above God in our affections and service ; it is a setting up our very lusts in God's stead , and serving them with his creatures ; must not all this be a burden and grievance to him ? How shall he endure to have his laws trampled on, his authority and government despised, our lusts idolized, and worshipped more than He ? And *lastly*, as sin maketh us deserve punishment, and calleth for justice to be done in the execution of vengeance, even so it is a burden to God , whose delight is in loving-kindness and mercy. *He doth*

not afflict willingly, neither grieve the children of men. Lam. 3. 33. Judgment is his work, but it is his strange work. Isa. 28. 21. A work it is which he is provoked to, before he will go about it. Therefore is sin called a provocation, and by it men are said to provoke or urge God. 'Tis a people, saith God, that provoketh me to anger continually to my face. Isa. 65. 3. This city hath been to me as a provocation of mine anger and of my fury. Jer. 32. 31. Sin will not let God alone, nor be at rest in his love and goodness to men, 'tis an urging him continually to repent of his kindness and of doing them good. If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them. Jer. 18. 10. Yea for the sins of men it is said, that It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at the heart. Gen. 6. 6. So that sin calling for vengeance, is a kind of violence offer'd to the gracious nature of God, it is a tiring out of his patience, that whereas God, to declare his merciful nature, is often said, Exod. 32. 14, &c. to repent him of evil which men's sins had provoked him to inflict upon them

for correction, sin at last constraineth him in a manner to vengeance. I will stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee, I am weary of repenting. *Jer. 15. 6.* So that sin even pulleth forth the hand of God out of his bosom, and armeth it against the sinner; it ladeth God, as it were unwilling to it, with the weapons of his indignation, *Isa. 13. 5.* and maketh him rise up in fury, *Ezek. 8. 18* saying, *Ab, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* *Isa. 1. 24.* Such a burden is our sin to God, that he seemeth to have no ease because of it. And thus doth God shew his hatred of sin, as of a thing that is burdensome and grievous to him, speaking of it after the manner of men, as we use to do of that which loadeth, oppresseth, tireth, wearieth us, so that we are no longer able to bear it.

But if we would see how heavy and grievous a load sin is, and how odious it is to God, let us look upon *J E S U S* the Redeemer of sinners, the eternal, the only begotten, the best beloved *Son of the Father*, in whom alone he is well pleased. How odious is sin unto God, when he would condescend that

the Son of his love, the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, should for the purging of our sins, make himself of no reputation, take upon him the form of a servant, be made in the likeness of man, humble himself, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross? What was this that could so depress and humble the glorious Son of God? What but sin? Not his own, he was the lamb of God, without all spot or blemish, which came to take away the sin of the world: It was our sin, The L O R D hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isa. 53. 6. This was the heavy load which lay upon him, wherewith he was oppressed and afflicted, ver. 7. He his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. 1 Pet. 2. 24. He hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows. Isa. 53. 4. He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, ver. 5. This was that heavy load, the very foregoing sense whereof put him into a bitter Agony, and forced from his body sweat as it were great drops of bloud falling down

Heb. 1.

Phil. 2.

1 Pet. 1. 19.  
Joh. 1. 29.

down to the ground. Luk. 22. 44. And his soul was exceeding sorrowfull, and very heavy, even unto death. Matt. 26. 37, 38. Here see and admire the weight of sin which pressed to death the Lord of life. It is by this same thing that men are said to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. Ephes. 4. 30.

§. III. 2. Let us look abroad in the world, and whatsoever we behold therein, as it should be a monitor to us to love and honour the great, wise and good Creator of heaven and earth and all things therein, so may it also teach us how heavy a burden to the world sin is. The Apostle, Rom. 8. 20, 21, 22. speaketh of the Creature as made subject to vanity, and in the bondage of corruption, and faith, the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together untill now: longing and labouring to be delivered from that vanity and bondage. Though some by the words [creature] and [creation] understand the Heathen or Gentile world, and by [vanity and bondage] idolatry and the sins accompanying it, and so departing from the common

terpretation of this Scripture; yet (not to dispute which was St. Paul's meaning in this place) it is certainly a sad truth, which most Interpreters deliver as his sense, that the whole world of creatures is by sin subjected to much vanity, and brought into the bondage of corruption. The *curse* laid upon the *ground* for man's sake, Gen. 3. 17. lieth very heavy upon it, and we to our sorrow see and feel it daily. The beauteous face of the earth is become disfigured with *thorns and thistles*, with many cumbersome and noisome weeds: very much both of the pleasantness and the virtue of the creatures is lost as to us; and with many venomous, poisonous and noxious qualities hath our sin filled many of them. Many of them made for our help and use, and therefore subject unto man, are now become rebellious and a terror to us, very untractable and hardly to be tamed by us, and those that are tamed, we must serve them before they will serve us. But the greatest of all *vani-ties* which the *creatures* are now subject to is our abuse of them to the dishonour of the *Creator*: whilst we make them the instruments of sin, and food for our lusts.

lusts : they are made by the Devil to  
 bates to tempt us with, and we make  
 them weapons to war against God and  
 our own Souls. They are exceedingly  
 dishonour'd by our loving them too well  
 and more than we do God, and they  
 are therefore unsatisfactory to us because  
 we covet them above measure. We  
 may the Sun be weary of giving  
 light to *riot in the day-time*; and the  
 Moon grudge to give us light to com-  
 mit the *works of darkness*: and the glori-  
 ous face of Heaven may well veil  
 self in clouds as ashamed of our op-  
 impieties. What wasteness and deso-  
 lation hath sin made in many parts of the  
 earth by floods and earthquakes and  
 fires from heaven, by the pestilential  
 contagion of the air, and malignant in-  
 fluences of the stars? What drought  
 and barrenness, what blastings and mi-  
 dews, what rottenness, stench and pi-  
 trefaction doth it daily groan under?  
 How is it shaken with wars and tumults,  
 confusions and disorders of all sorts?  
 How is it polluted and made drunk  
 with the blood of the slain, and made  
 to surfeit upon the rotten carcasses  
 wherewith it is laden by famine, sword

and pestilence? So that we may borrow the Prophet's words, *Isa. 24. 19.* to express its sufferings. —*The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly, the earth reels to and fro, like a drunkard, and is removed like a cottage, and the transgression thereof is heavy upon it.* All this is the fruit of sin, and all this layeth the heavier load upon us men.

§. IV. 3. Let us now therefore consider *our selves*, whose the sin is, and if we have not quite lost all sense and feeling, we shall soon perceive the intolerableness of this heavy burden. 1. As it hath sunk us below our primitive dignity. 2. As it hath laid us under God's displeasure and curse. And 3. as it hath made every thing a burden to us, and us a burden to every thing.

1. Sin is a *burden* to us in that it *hath very much sunk us below our selves*, and hath made us most vile and contemptible things in comparison of what we were made at first by God. It hath mightily debased our nature and spoiled us of our primitive honour and dignity, and hath thrust us down into a conditi-

on too much like unto that of brutes. *Man being in honour, abideth but is become like the beasts that perish.* Psal. 49. 12. It hath almost quite quenched and put out that light of Reason which God had set up in the soul of man to be the guide of our actions, which is the great difference betwixt man and beasts. This should discover unto us God and our selves; God's wisdom, power and goodness in every thing, and our happiness in God. But sin hath clouded this light within us, that neither know nor consider things as ought to do. *The Oxe, saith God, knoweth his owner, and the Ass his master; but Israel doth not know, my people do I consider.* Isa. 1. 3. Sin hath so corrupted and perverted the the Will in man, that whatever men are brought to know God and themselves, they are not willing to regard either as they ought; for they are apt to say to God with the prophet, *Jer. 2. 31. We are Lords, we will come more unto thee.* We are all bowed much into our selves, and are resolved to please our selves and to have our own Wills, whatsoever the Will of God is, how plainly soever it be reveal'd unto us.

us: we will do what we will do, though we be sure to die for it. *Why will ye die, O House of Israel?* Ezek. 18. 31. Sin hath so depraved, disordered and depressed our affections downward towards the earth, that they are set upon almost nothing else but those very things *on the earth*; which we are forbidden to set them upon, Col. 3. 2. We cannot raise them up to *the things above*, as we are there commanded. We are naturally without life and sense and motion as to heavenly things: but men's God is *their belly, and their glory is in their shame, and they mind* (yea even dote upon) *earthly things*, as it is, Phil. 3. 19. So that every one of us may with heaviness of heart say unto God with the Psalmist. I was even as a beast before thee. Psal. 73. 22.

2. Sin is a very heavy burden to us, as it hath *laid us under the heavy displeasure and curse of God*, and draweth down his heavy hand upon us in many grievous afflictions and fearfull judgments. When *David* was chastised for his sins he thus cried out unto God, *day and night thy hand is heavy upon me.* Psal. 32. 4. *The burden of the Lord's anger*

ger is heavy. Isa. 30. 27. How hard labours, pains and sicknesses we made to suffer in our bodies? What griefs, troubles, vexations and unquietnesses endure we in our minds? What vain contrivances are we daily perplexed with, and what unexpected disappointments do we meet with in our signs and endeavours? Great losses of our possessions; crosses, straits and difficulties in all our ways attend us, numberless evils of all sorts are coming on us because of our sins. So that may every one of us say unto God, Job, Chap. 7. v. 20. *I have sinned, shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am become a burden to my self? Finally, such is this last sin, that if we go on under it unto the end, it will certainly sink us under the heavy wrath of God into the next most Hell.* In the mean time if we but so much awake as to feel our sins and the evils of them, what a load of guilt there needs lie upon our hearts and minds from that fearfull looking for judgment, and fiery indignation, which will devour the adversaries? Heb. 10. 27.

3. Sin is a grievous burden in this consideration, *That it rendereth us a burden unto every thing, and every thing a burden unto us.* The whole creation, as we have seen, doth as it were groan, and tremble, and reel under us, as unable to bear us. The holy Angels in Heaven amongst whom there is joy over one sinner that repenteth, Luk. 15. 7. must needs be grieved to see our sins. The hearts and spirits of all good men are grieved to behold God dishonoured and their brethren's Souls in danger by sin. Every good Lot, in seeing and bearing, vexeth his righteous Soul from day to day with the filthy conversation of the wicked, and their unlawfull deeds. 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8. Horrour, saith David, hath taken bold upon me, because of the wicked that forfaketh thy law. Psal. 119. 53. And again. v. 136. Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law. The Ministers of Christ, such as St. Paul, are in travail, till Christ be formed in their flocks. Gal. 4. 19. And like him, they have great heaviness, and continual sorrow in their hearts, Rom. 9. 2. for men's sins, and the miseries which are like to come upon them for the same. Yea sin maketh even

even the best things that we do, than of w  
they be such things as God himself h  
commanded, a burden to God. the  
what purpose, saith he, is the multitud We  
your sacrifices unto me. When ye com titi  
appear before me, who bathe required eas  
at your hand, to tread my Courts? In vini  
is an abomination to me, the New-m ill a  
and Sabbaths, the calling of Assembli opp  
cannot away with, it is iniquity, even ver  
solemn meeting. Your New-moons and or  
appointed feasts my soul bateth: they the  
a trouble to me, I am weary to bear i rin  
Isa. 1. 11, &c. The very prayers of hat  
wicked are an abomination to him. Ps  
29. 9. Thus are we by sin become  
burden both to Heaven and earth.

And sin hath made even everythi  
but especially the best things, a bur  
to us. All is vanity and vexation of  
rit. Eccl. 1. 14. There is nothing  
bringeth not some kind of trouble wi  
it: no estate or condition is easie to  
or fully pleaseth us, something ther  
always in it that discontenteth and g  
veth us; we neither know how to wa  
nor how to abound: what we have  
dare not enjoy for fear of wanting,  
cannot enjoy for the tormenting thoug

of what we want : and what we want we dare not seek for, lest the obtaining thereof should cost us what we have. We are like them that have great appetites and weak digestions, we are at no ease whilst we fast for the continual craving of our appetites ; and we are as ill at ease when we have eaten for the oppression upon our Stomachs. The very care of keeping or fear of loosing, or desire of getting what we love ; and the grief of enduring, or fear of incurring, or longing to be rid of what we hate , is our continual torment. So that both riches and poverty, honour and disgrace , health and sickness, yea our very time and life are burdens to us.

*All things are full of labour.* Eccles.

1. 8. *In much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.* ver. 18. But above all, as we are sinners, those things are most our trouble which either are the means of comfort or should be our greatest delight. Repentance is a bitter pill to the sick soul , and mortification of the flesh is worse than the Chyrurgeon's flasing and burning ; and self-denial is as bad as self-murder to us. In a word all the service and worship

ship of God which should be our most  
lightfull exercise and the greatest refre  
ment to our souls, *what a weariness is it*  
Mal. 1. 13. yea, even our good and  
cious God, the infinite Good, in whom  
alone we should glory, and in whom they  
alone we can be happy is the most un  
fie burden of all. *Thou hast been to me*  
*of me O Israel. Isa. 43. 22.*

Surely no more can be needful  
shew us how grievous a load sin is  
should be accounted by us. Of  
men, *men* that would be thought  
and able to discern between good  
evil, yea and *they* of all other  
who take it as an affront to be ac  
ted ignorant of any thing, though it  
that perhaps which a truly wise  
thinks least worth the knowing, would  
be perswaded to see and consider  
that so they might be brought at  
out of love with, if not to a perfec  
tred (as in all reason they should)  
that which doth at present so debt  
and will in the end utterly ruine them  
Men could not go on so merrily, or  
least so unconcernedly in a course of  
ning, if they would consider what a  
thy, and deadly load they carry.

reason of all that most unreasonable confidence, and groundless security which we see in sinners, is either, that they apprehend not the evil of sin how heavy and grievous a thing it is, or else, that they do not think or consider that they themselves are sinners, and have this sad load upon them. The *former*, the evil of sin hath been in some little measure shewn in what hath been said. The *latter*, that we are sinners comes now to be shewn in what followeth.

## C H A P. II.

## S E C T. I.

WE are all of us, none excepted, laden with this heavy burden of sin. Whatever the Devil hath persuaded any man to think of himself, this is a sad truth which God hath taught us in his word, that we are all sinners. Sin is a load which we bring into the world with us, and which as long as we live upon

upon earth we constantly carry about with us: And the longer we live, more we daily add unto it, if we do not come, as here we are invited, in Christ to be eased of it.

That we may understand this more fully, and be thoroughly convinced of it very nearly concerneth us to be: we will not be amiss to enquire how it came by this load. For sure it is, that sin is none of God's creatures, who soever it came, it came not from God, all that he made was very good. Gen.

31. Every thing in its kind had a measure of goodness communicated unto it by God, but man a greater share than of than any other creature under heaven. God made man upright. Eccl. 7.

*In the image of God created he him.* Gen.

I. 27. Then had man no load of corruption on his Soul to depress it, no burden of guilt on his conscience to gall him, no heavy curse from God to sink him, no grief, sorrow or vexation in his mind, no sickness, pain or weariness in his body, no trouble, annoyance or molestation from any of the creatures about him: but everything above him, about him, or within him, was light and ea-

to him ; and his duty, as well as his condition, was his pleasure and delight. It is not possible for us in our state of corruption to conceive the lightsomeness and the unmixed delights of Adam's pure Soul, how pleasant and ravishing unto it was the sight and contemplation of his God, the immense fountain of being and goodness ? How sweet and obliging the consideration of himself, his own noble frame and composure and induements ; of all the creatures and that variety of goodness communicated to them for his use and comfort ? How natural was it to him to love, praise and serve him who had made him to be the Lord, next to himself, of all things here below, the compleat master and commander of himself, and the candidate of everlasting glory ? Hitherto there could be no burden, because there was no sin.

But now when man unmindfull of his God and himself, of the duty and dignity to which he was created, bowed his ear to hearken to his Wife the weaker Vessel, and that, after she had stooped so low as to converse with the *Serpent* ; when he cast down his eyes from

God above to the creature below, he  
came like the beasts that perish, ~~for~~  
burden, and such a load did the sub-  
*Serpent* lay upon him, as he was neith-  
er able to bear, nor to cast off again. He  
was tempted to disobey his make-  
command in eating of the fruit where-  
upon pain of death he was charged  
to eat; and hereby he ate Poyson to  
nature which by a malignant operat-  
corrupted all his noble faculties. Hence-  
forward he became a burden to the  
world, and the world was made a bur-  
den to him. The ground out of which  
he was taken was *accursed* for his sin,  
and brought a troublesome burden of  
*thornes and thistles* to vex and weary him.  
Gen. 3. 17. His life became a burden  
to him, for it could now no other-  
wise be preserved than by *eating his bread*  
*sorrow*, and *in the sweat of his face*, v. 19.  
19. He became a burden to himself  
he was ashamed of his own nakedness  
and sought for a covering of *fig-leaves*.  
v. 7. And God himself became a burden  
to him, in whom alone he could hope  
for life and happiness, he was afraid of  
his voice, and ran *among the trees of the*  
*garden to hide himself from the presence*

the Lord God, v. 8. Lastly, by disobeying the God of his life, which was his sin, he brought on himself such a load as sunk him down in death into *the dust whence he was taken*, v. 19. And, had not the wonderfull mercy of God come into his relief, had sunk him irrecoverably into the lowest Hell, which he had deserved.

§. II. We here see how the first load came upon the first Man and Woman, *Adam* and *Eve*, our first Parents, and this *load* was *sin* with the sad attendants of it. Neither was this load buried with them in their graves, but is intailed upon *us* their *Children* to all generations, as the miserable legacy their dying innocence bequeathed us; and there is not one of us all but he hath a deep share in it. Which that we may the better understand, we are to know, That God did not deal with *Adam* as with a single person onely, but as he was the *first man* whom he had made to people and replenish the world, as the *Father* and *head* of the whole plantation and race of mankind, and so transacted with him for himself and all his posteri-

ty. The estate and priviledges which he had settled upon him at his creation, was not as an estate for life and personal onely, but it was to have and hold to him and his for all future generations upon this condition onely, that ~~per~~ <sup>the</sup> obedience should be given to the will of his *maker*, and that upon default of such obedience all should become forfeited and void. That this was the condition of his tenure is abundantly clear from the penalty annexed, *That in the daye eat thereof, or sinned, he should surely die.* Gen 2. 17.

Now we are certainly told, that *Adam* disobeyed his *maker's* command, brake the law which was the condition of the estate, and thereby forfeited all right and title to whatever he held, and became obnoxious to the penalty of death. And what was thus forfeited by the *father*, his *children* can lay no just claim unto: But that very estate, whatsoever it was, unto which his offence had reduced him, must needs be all that any of his *children* are born unto. If *Adam* had any thing which was so his own that he held it not of *God*, it might be supposed to descend unto us. But if

all he had, and he himself was God's, it is manifest he could not hold it any longer nor upon any other terms than it pleased God, nor could any thing of it descend upon his Children but onely so far and on such terms as God should chuse. If *Adam* made a forfeiture of all, and did incur the penalty threatened, it was an undeserved mercy if the penalty was not inflicted to the utmost, if any thing of it was abated ; and if any thing of what he enjoyed was left to him or his, it must needs be a free *gift* of God. Thus then the case stands. Our Father *Adam* was God's Creature, and whatsoever he had in him or without him was the *free gift* of God ; and no right or hopes he could have either of continuing what he was, or enjoying what he did, or receiving any addition to his happiness, but meerly by the free bounty of God. God commanded *Adam* to doe his will, and live in perfect obedience unto him, and threatened him that if he did not so, he should die ; plainly enough intimating that all he had was held by him onely on condition of obedience, even as far as life it self. *Adam* by disobedience forfeited all, and

deserved to die. God did not, as he had deserved, immediately deprive him of life ; God did not, as he might have done, take from him the natural powers of a man ; God did not take from him the power of procreation or begetting Children ; but, to make him sensible what he had done in sinning, he left him in a *dying* condition, and assured him he should *die*, though he promised a *Saviour*, by whom he might escape eternal death : and he left him *his nature*, as himself by sin had made it, corrupted ; and the *faculties* thereof weakned and depraved ; yet under a possibility of being restored and purified by grace : and though he beget Children, he can now leave them nothing, but what his disobedience had left him, he cannot derive to them any other nature than he had, full of corruption and weaknesses. *A corrupt tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit.* Matt. 7. 17. Though we are born *men*, with the same kind of Souls and Bodies as *Adam* was made withall ; and though we have the same *faculties* of Soul as he had, to wit, of understanding and chusing, yet are these in *us* as sin had made them in *him*.

*Adam*

Adam was made in the Image of God upright and holy, but sinfull Adam begat Children after his own likeness. Gen. 5. 3. Sinfull Children. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Job 14. 4. We must all confess as the Psalmist did, Psal. 51. 5. We are shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our Mothers conceive us. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Joh. 3. 6. Corrupt and sinfull flesh, and because of that, mortal also. Thus, saith the Apostle, By one man's disobedience many were made sinners. Rom. 5. 19. And how many, we are plainly told by him before, v. 12. By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. And by what one man this was, he telleth us. 1 Cor. 15. 22. In Adam all die. Hence it is very plain, that we are all of us, even the infant that is new born, laden with sin. We see that such infants die as well as others, and we are sure, that death came upon all for sin, and death is the wages of sin. Rom. 6. 23. and passeth upon all for that all have sinned. Rom. 5. 12. Whosoever therefore dieth, He onely excepted how died for our sins Jesus Christ, is a who sinner.

§. III. It is therefore a vain and foolish thing for us, instead of humbly believing, what *Christ* and his *Apostles* have told us, to stand proudly disputing how these things can be. It is a great part of our hereditary disease that we are born with, that we are unapt to believe our *Physician*, when he tells us we are sick, and offereth to cure us. Should the man that was born blind and had his sight restored by *Christ*, have shew'd any wisdom, in refusing such a blessing offered him, till *Christ* had satisfied him in answering that question which the Disciples asked concerning him, *Job. 9. 2. Master, who did sin, this man or his Parents, that he was born blind?* Would we not think those men mad indeed, who, when they make a very hard shift to crawl a-long the way under the heavy loads they carry upon their backs, and go groaning and puffing under them, bowed down almost to the earth, shall yet refuse our help freely offered them, and that upon this account onely, that they will not believe they carry any such weights, unless you can give them a perfect account how

how and why they are so laden? Even so absurd are many amongst us, who though they cannot chuse but feel this original corruption of their nature, yet will not be convinced there is any such thing, except you can satisfie their curiosity, concerning the way and manner how this corruption is derived from *Adam*, and punctually answer all the questions they shall please to ask you, about the manner of its propagation, or the equity and reasonableness of its imputation. It ought in all reason to satisfie us, that we have an able and good *Physician*, who perfectly understandeth the nature, cause and progress of our distemper, and is ready to heal us. Our business is to feel we are sick, to desire to be well, to believe our Physician, heartily to love and thank him for his kindness and care of us, and joyfully yield to his prescriptions and ordering. If we will not do all this, or are too well conceited of our health and soundness; we onely thereby shew, that our disease hath prevailed too far upon us, and hath disordered our brain, and stupified our senses, and put us past all possibility of cure till we come to our

selves again. Then certainly our own  
sense and daily sad experience will bear  
witness to the truth of what the Scripture  
telleth us of our natural state and  
condition. For

1. Do we not to our sorrow see and  
feel that to be true which is told us, *Job*  
**14. 1, 2.** *Man that is born of a Woman*  
*is of few days, and full of trouble. He*  
*cometh up like a flower and is cut down;*  
*he fleeth also as a shadow, and continuall*  
*not.* And *Psal. 103. 15.* *As for man*  
*his days are as grass, as a flower of the*  
*field, so he flourisheth: For the wind*  
*seth over it, and it is gone, and the plant*  
*thereof shall know it no more.* And *Job*  
**5. 7.** *Man is born unto trouble, as the*  
*sparks fly upward.* And we not suffi-  
ciently convinced of our own mortality,  
and that we must all die, and return to  
dust? And is it not as notable a sign  
of our native corruption as any that can be  
given us, that we are so little mindful  
of our dying condition, and so little  
carefull to provide for death, or so much  
as seriously to consider, what shall be  
come of us when we die? Are we not  
convinced by what we see and feel, that  
this life is brim-full of troubles and vexa-  
tions?

tions? Do we not feel weakness, sickness, pains, many languishings and decays in our bodies; many perplexities and distractions, many fears and anxieties, many doubts and troublesome jealousies in our minds; many losses and disappointments in our possessions and labours? He that can say he is without some of these, let him cast the first stone at him, who thus slandereth the life of man. And can we think it agreeable to the infinite goodness of God to create man at first to all this, and make him with a design to vex him, and delight himself in his vexation?

Indeed they who have improved their original corruption to that degree of bruitish ferity and wildness, as to make a recreation of cruelty, and to delight in tormenting creatures, may possibly in time come to have so little use of their reason, through their long disuse or abuse of it, as to think *God* altogether such an one as themselves. But it will always be most abominable to every sober man, to think that an infinitely good God should give life unto man onely that it might be a torment to him, and that he gave him reason onely to make him more sensible of his misery, or that he inflicteth

inflicteth any evil upon man, but for sin  
which doth deserve it.

2. Do we not find our selves very ignorant and short-sighted in many things, which we must needs confess to be of very great concernment to us to know, as touching the affairs of this present life and world? Do we certainly know what is best for us, and the best and surest means of obtaining it? Do we know any better, what will prove hurtfull to us, with the ready and sure way to shun or prevent it? If any man can think that he knoweth all this, the issue will confute him to his sorrow, and the frustration of his wisest contrivance and subtlest projects for himself, will shew him how little he understood all the obstructions which lay in his way, or those numerous emergencies which might defeat his hopes. Yea, we cannot but find our inclinations very often too strong for our reason, and carrying us by a pleasing violence down the stream, when our reason telleth us we should be more wary, and can hardly escape drowning. We see the beasts themselves by a secret instinct of nature, carried on to their proper food, and shun-

ning

ning those things which are hurtfull to them. And can we be so unreasonable as to imagine that the wise and good God indued man with far nobler faculties than they have, to no better purpose than with them to contrive his own ruine or hurt? Hath he the faculty of reasoning given him, onely to reason himself into uncertainties and snares? And hath a chusing and resolving faculty, onely to chuse what is unreasonable, or unlikely, or destructive? That *man*, of all other creatures, should act so uncertainly, and go on so blindly in dangerous paths, and either see so little, or chuse so foolishly in things relating to his own preservation and comfort, must needs proceed from a strange corruption of his faculties. And there can hardly be a clearer argument of this corruption, than that a man should think otherwise.

3. Do we not perceive our natural weakness and blindness and weariness most of all in those things, which, of all others, do most nearly concern us; in things spiritual belonging to our souls, and in things that relate to our everlasting peace and eternal happiness? Hath

God

God given unto men souls of a spiritual substance, and such as can find no satisfaction in gross and earthly things, but are always thirsting and longing for something more agreeable to their nature which must be something spiritual and heavenly ; and shall we think, that he either hath not provided for them such things as may satisfie them , or made them at first contrary to all other creatures uncapable either of discerning, or losing such things, when discovered and commended to them ? that is, shall we think that God made such a creature Man, to be perpetually tormented with restless and unsatiable desires ? It is a thing most evident , that nothing less than the chief and everlasting good can yield unto man any perfect contentment and satisfaction ; whatever he enjoys besides, he always feels a want and emptiness in himself, and a craving desire of something else, though he know not what it is. All have a longing after happiness and happy they cannot think themselves whilst they find a scantness and imperfection in every thing they can best meet with, or whilst they consider there is a possibility of losing what they now enjoy.

enjoy, and a certainty of dying and leaving all behind them. We would have enough, and we would have it durable, and we would live for ever to enjoy it. Nothing less than all this will please us. We cannot be easie under the thoughts of wanting, losing or dying. Did God then give man knowledge, and yet hide from him the onely good which it most highly concerneth him to know? Did he give him the affections of desire and love, and yet not to love that chief good which is the most proper object of love, and in the love whereof his happiness must consist? How else cometh it to pass that man doth now so hardly attain to any true knowledge of *God*? And that the best of men, with all the helps which they now have, reach to such low and imperfect degrees of it? Why is it, that their affections are so slow and dull to *God*-ward, now that he doth discover unto them so much of his own goodness both in his Word and Works? Could this be so, were not our faculties exceedingly depraved by sin? How did the wisest of all the Heathen Sages miserably blunder and confound themselves in their notions of a *God* and *happiness*?

And

And with what ridiculous fooleries did they seek to pacifie his wrath and keep his favour ? How uneasie did they find it to drive out of their thoughts a future state both of happiness and misery after death ? Yet at what a loss were they in thinking what this future state should be ? And as for us who have the *Gospel* of *Christ*, and therein the clearest revelation of *God*, and *heaven*, and the way to happiness, that we must expect upon earth : yet how hardly are we brought to apply our selves to the learning of what he would teach us, and what slow progress do we make, even the very best of us, in *Christ's School*. What strong inclinations do we very early discover to sin and vanity, and those things which *God* hath forbidden us to love, and the love whereof will bring us to final ruine and destruction. With what reluctance of mind, and how much against the hair are we drawn to submit to the will of *God*, and the diligent use of the means of life ? How hotly and earnestly do we pursue, and with how much adoe are we restrained from the pursuit of things vain and unprofitable, and how coldly and feebly

at best do we bestir our selves about the one thing necessary ? How hard a task do we find it to rule our selves, and gain so much command over our unruly affections, as to keep them within any bounds of sobriety and moderation ? And whilst we want discretion to order our selves how hard a matter is it to persuade us, with any patience, to submit our selves to the government of others ? By all this if we be not wilfully blind, we may easily discern, that sin hath much disordered us, that we are brought under its dominion ; and may find it true, that Satan our adversary hath by sin got much power over us, even to lead us captive at his will, having blinded the eyes of our understandings. So that *the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.* 1 Cor. 2. 14. And the carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Rom 8. 7. It is too evident how contentedly we live in subjection to the law of sin in our members. Rom. 7. 23. And how we drudge to make provision for the

*the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof, Rom 13. ult.*

§. IV. This is the sad condition of every man and woman that is born into the world. And very strange and lamentable it is, that it should be no more consider'd and laid to heart by us. Is it not wonder, to see how contentedly and unconcernedly most of us, and how proudly and insolently many of us, under this so foul and heavy load? Certainly most men little think, what of all sorts sin hath brought upon them already, and much less do they seriously consider, whither, if they be not sonably eased of it by Christ, it will bring them at the last; seeing they will be so well content to bear it still, as to take so little care, nay, are so very unwilling, for any heavenly treasure, to part with it. Such is the far greatest part of mankind: They can eat and drink, and laugh and sleep, even as they had nothing at all in them or about them to molest or offend them, as if their peace were perfectly made with God, and they were out of danger; as if they had nothing at all to bind

burden their consciences, or create them any farther trouble. However the case is now with such careless and secure sinners, it must be otherwise with them before it can be well. And yet how much more absurd are they, and they are not a few, who so little think what they are, or what sin hath made them, whence they came, or whither they must go, or what they carry by the way, that they walk so stoutly and proudly under their load, as if they were too good for all the world, and nothing in the world good enough for them, or fine enough to feed their swinish Lusts. These are they that can think so well of themselves that there is hardly any room in them for the least good thought of any other; who are puffed up and swell to an unreasonable greatness in their own eyes, and are elevated above the ordinary stature of mankind in the conceit of their own worth: who upon every occasion, yea where there is no occasion given them, can take occasion to boast themselves, and talk vainly of their noble birth and parentage, and the dignity of their ancestors, for which they would be thought much

much better men than their Neighbo  
 and take it for an affront to hear any  
 their poorer brethren, or men of a  
 er rank in the world, upon any acco  
 compared with them ; as if they we  
 made of some finer kind of mold, or  
 Souls of a nobler original than the  
 mon sort of men. Alas, alas, Not  
 dirtiest Tinker, or vilest Ragman  
 goes along the streets scraping up a  
 livelyhood, carrieth so foul and na  
 load upon his back, as these do up  
 their Souls ; who would fain app  
 such gay and glorious things in the  
 of men. Can any man be proud of  
 ing the Child of a Beggar, and a Ra  
 too ? Yet such are we all till we be  
 again of the Spirit of God, and m  
 new creatures ; and be sure of this,  
 humility, and not pride, is the esse  
 quality of the new man. Except ye ha  
 sinned and become as little Children  
 not enter into the Kingdom of He  
 Matt. 18. 3. Can a man be prud of  
 scab and leprosie of stinking fores  
 ulcers ? And yet such a filthy and lo  
 some thing in God's sight is the fi  
 Lord or Lady in the World, how go  
 ously or richly soever covered or pa

ted over to blind the eyes of men, till Christ hath healed them. Can any one be proud of his captivity, and of the vilest sort of slavery and drudgery? Yet such a wretched captive, slave and drudge is the stateliest he or she that liveth, though he be too apt to look upon all others as his vassals and born to serve his lusts, till he be ransomed and set at liberty by Christ the redeemer of sinners. Would men, in deriving their pedegrees, ascend, as we all may, as high as *Adam*, they could not chuse but by beholding the dust whence they were taken, learn humility, and by considering the load he bequeathed them, learn to delight less in their drudgery. *Adam* sold, not himself alone, but all his offspring for one taste of the forbidden fruit, so that we may all cry out in the Apostles words, *Rom. 7. 14. We are sold under sin.* Yea sold we were, before we were born, and come into the World in bondage and thraldome, there to drudge for our enemy, that seeks the destruction of our Souls; to sweat, and toil, and sigh and groan out our miserable days in the bitterness of our Spirits, saying, *O wretched men that we are, who shall deliver*

liver us from the body of this death. Ro  
7. 24. And thus must we continue  
ever enslaved, if we come not to Ch

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## CHAP. III.

### SECT. I.

**F**OR JESUS CHRIST alone  
ease us of this load of sin. This  
the third point or lesson we are to learn  
from the Text. Come unto me, saith Christ,  
and therefore unto him must we go.  
we must eternally despair of earthly  
refreshment. For ever blessed be  
God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
for this his most wonderfull mercy,  
tender compassion to us the sinfull  
of men. Adam sinned, and was ac-  
cused, as well he might, of the foul sin  
he had brought upon himself. At  
what course took he to be eased of his  
All we reade of him is onely this, he  
was cast away, and would fain have hid him  
from the presence of his offended God.

if he would have left his load among the trees of the garden, or have lost himself there, that the *omniscient* should not find him out. But, alas, he had lost himself sufficiently already by yielding to the temptation of the Serpent, and if God had not found him out, like a wild beast that is mortally wounded and runs among the thickets to lay himself down and die, he had been lost to all eternity. Thus foolish men when they have sinned, and their consciences begin to check them for it, the first thing they do is to seek out some covering for their sin, and vainly labouring to elude God's eyes and justice, run themselves out of the reach of mercy. But such is the abundant love of God to man, he would not thus lose that creature whom he had mark'd out amongst all the rest for himself with his own *Image*: he would not suffer the Serpent to carry quite away the choicest flower of the garden; though it was ill blasted, he was determined it should not quite wither, but revive and flourish, though never again on earth in so much beauty and glory as before. God calleth after *Adam*, finds out him and his sin together, and unsought

sought unto, of his own free grace and pity, promiseth him to send one to his deliverer, and his Physician, that should heal *him* and wound the *Serpent* that should ease him of his burden by laying it upon himself. O most admirable and inestimable mercy ! Who could have dared to hope that the great and glorious Majesty of Heaven and Earth, wickedly violated, and offended by creature of his own, made of the dust, should thus condescend to follow their master and rebel with his loving kindness and gracious pardon ? That he should rather than utterly destroy a creature than which he could have made numberless thousands better with one word out of his mouth, himself contrive so wondrous full a way for his recovery, as that the incarnation and passion of his eternal Son ? By a word he made less than a word, even by withdrawing that upholding word of his power he might have destroyed him ; but save him the eternal word must be no flesh and dwell among us. Joh. i. 14. promiseth Adam, that the seed of the man shall bruise the Serpents head. Gen. 15. And, This seed (faith St. Paul) Chap.

Christ. Gal. 3.16. Even the eternal *Word*, God's own and onely begotten *Son*, even *Him, in the fulness of time, God sent forth made of a Woman*. Gal. 4. 4. to be born of a pure *Virgin*. Luk. 2. 7. And named him *Jesus*, because he was to save his people from their sins. Matt. 1. 21. Neither is their *Salvation in any other*, for there is none other name under *Heaven* given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Act. 4. 12.

Here then is that true *Joshua* indeed, of whom that *other* was a *type*, who can bring us after all we have suffered by the way into possession of the promised land, the heavenly *Canaan*, a place of everlasting rest from all our wandrings labours and enemies. *Moses* may conduct us out of *Egypt* the land of thick darkness wherein we are born, the *Law* may be our *Instructor* and *Schoolmaster*, teaching us our duty to God and Man, to fit us for an higher form: It bringeth us to the knowledge of our sins by discovering unto us our duty, and it maketh us feel our misery, by shewing us together with our duty, both our inability to do it, and the curse that is due unto us for not doing it; thus it fits and pre-

pares us for a *Saviour*, but whilſt  
bringeth us not through unto *Jesus*,  
*whom* yet *Moses* in the *Law* and the *Prophets*  
did write. Joh. i. 45. It must needs  
leave us in a *Wilderness* of perplexities,  
in a confusion of sad thoughts concerning  
our selves and our condition, and then  
we must die, without a true *Joshua*  
*Jesus*.

§. II. This therefore it nearly concerneth us to be thoroughly convinced of as of a most certain and comfortable truth, that *Jesus* is the *Saviour* of *Sinners*, the onely person that can ease us of our heavy load. And to this we are to call to mind, That, as we are all conceived and born in Sin; so in there be two things which load us, and which must be removed, or else we can never enter into rest. These two are the *guilt* and the *pollution* of Sin already mentioned. *Sin* is the *transgression* of the *law*. i Joh. 3. 4. the will of the great *God* and *Governour* of the world: And therefore layeth us open to his wrath, it bringeth the curse of the *Law* upon us, and layeth us under the sentence of *damnation*. *Sin* is also a *foul* and *loathsome*

some disease, it is an uncleanness which maketh us odious and abominable in the pure eyes of the most holy God and utterly indisposeth us to take any delight in him who is the onely happiness of our immortal Souls. Of these two things we must be sensible, and when we are so, what are we the better, if we can find no advocate or favourite in Court to procure our pardon, nor Physician to cure us of our disease? If the *Law* have discovered unto us our misery, and the sadness of our corrupt state, what advantage can this be to us if we can find no *Gospel*, no good tidings of Salvation, or word of life? All this hitherto would be no better than to torment us yet alive, and put us to a long and lingring death, and make us feel our selves a dying. We might very well say in St. Paul's words. *Rom. 7. 9.* *We were alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and we died.* So long as we saw not our selves in the glass of the word, which sheweth us all our deformities, we seemed to our selves beaufitull things, but when that was laid before our eyes, and we were made to see what foul work sin had made with us, our

good opinions of our selves vanished and came to nothing. When we find by the law what we should be, and that we are not such as we should be; that we are sinners and under a sentence of death; when the thundering voice of the law hath awakened our consciences to consider this, what remaineth but that our hearts die within us, and all our vain hopes and comforts flee, and leave us in despair? Thus it must needs be with us if we be without a *Jesus*.

§. III. i. As we are *guilty* and *condemned* persons, a *Pardon* must either be granted us, or the law must be executed upon us. The sentence of the law to this purpose: *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* Gal. 10. None of us have done them, and therefore, *Judgment is come upon all men to condemnation.* Rom. 5. 18 What course then must we now take? Or how shall we escape this condemnation that is come upon us? He that is once guilty cannot be so vain as to think he can make himself guiltless. The offence is committed, the Law is broken, the punishment thereby

thereby become due, the offender is by the Law to die, and God the just judge of all the earth *must do right*. We can have nothing but Mercy to flee unto, nothing have our Souls to take Sanctuary in but the goodness of an offended *God*. His gracious pardon is the onely thing which can do us good, and yet what way this may possibly be procured we are at an utter loss to contrive. We have no worth in our selves to deserve it, no past good services that we have done to *God* have we to plead, to promises of future service, whatever we may promise, have we of our selves any strength to perform: nor know we of any favourite of *God*, whose interest with him may encourage us to *rely* on his intercession. What must we do? None can grant a pardon but one'y that great Sovereign *King* of all the world, whose law is broken, against whose honour and government the sin is committed.

§. IV. Ask not here, as some are too saucily bold to do, what *God* might or cou'd have done if it had pleased him? or, whether, had he been willing so to do, he might not have passed by man's

sin and disobedience without punishment, or have given him an absolute pardon for his sin, without demanding any satisfaction to be made to his justice for the violation of his law ? But search the records of God's doings his sacred word, and learn thence what he hath done ; and then be so just to God, as to conclude that whatsoever he hath done, must needs be most agreeable to the rules of infinite wisdom and goodness. And truly, whatsoever foolish men are apt to judge in haste, and led by partiality to their lusts, and a desire of impunity, or a freedom of sinning without fear of punishment, when they seriously ponder, even with those imperfect remains of reason which sin hath left them, the methods of God's dealing with sinfull men in order to their recovery by *Jesus Christ*, they must needs be satisfied, that they ought not in reason to expect or wish that God should do any more or better for the Sinner's relief, than he hath done and assured us he will do. Can it be thought a thing reasonable, that the Great *Lord* and just *Gouvernour* of the world, who had made man in all respects able and fit to do unto him

him a reasonable service upon earth, in rendering unto him the honour and glory due unto his name, as the powerfull maker, right owner, wise governour, bountifull preserver, and ultimate end of the whole creation, shoul'd when he had, against all the obligations of blessings already received, and assurances of greater blessings hereafter to be enjoy'd, and declarations of the evil which would come upon him by his sin, yet wilfully and needlesly chosen to transgress, and that by honouring the Devil in believing him rather than God: is it reasonable, I say, to expect, that God should now wholly wink at all this, or grant the offender an absolute pardon? Such a pardon to such an offender, who had by submitting to the Devil's temptation, when it was in his power and choice to have resisted him, given him that power over him which belonged to God onely, and brought himself to that pass that he would sin again, and do almost nothing else but sin? To what end is government set up and laws enacted, if it be certain men will break them, and if it be reasonable for them, when they have broken them, to hope for an abso-

hute pardon? How can we imagine it should appear to us, that God doth govern the world in righteousness, if he should suffer disobedience to his Government to go unpunished, and make no visible difference between his dutiful Children and wicked Rebels.

Suppose we now the most that can rationally be supposed: *First*, that it was not inconsistent with the truth and justice of God, not to inflict on man the whole penalty that was threatened in the law, as we are sure it was not, because it was not inflicted on him. Every act of grace doth not render a Governor false or unjust; if so, there could be no room for any thing but the utmost severity and rigour. *Secondly*, suppose, which is very true, that God's essential goodness inclineth him to mercy and compassion, and maketh him ready to embrace all methods of magnifying his clemency, and very willing to pardon. Suppose *thirdly*, that Man having offended God by sin, did yet retain so much knowledge of the goodness of God's nature, as might encourage him, even without any promise, to hope God would shew mercy to him, and not quite destroy him.

him. Suppose all this, yet still we must suppose one thing more, that man did, together with the knowledge of God's *goodness*, which gave him some hope, retain also so much knowledge of God's *governing justice*, and tender regard to the honour of his *government*, as would forbid him to hope that God would, how mercifull soever, declare his *mercy* in such a way, as he might not equally declare his *justice* also, and unwillingness to encourage the least disobedience to his laws. However therefore we may think it well becoming the *goodness* of God to abate something of the penalty, yet we must needs think it as becoming his *justice*, as our *governour*, to shew himself displeased at sin, and to make the Sinner sensible of his displeasure, and fearfull how he did offend again for the time to come. If then we judge it not unfit that a *pardon* should be granted, yet must we also think it reasonable it should be so qualified, as that the offender might perceive how hardly it was obtained, by the great price was paid for it; and by the loss of some privileges or undergoing some part at least of the penalty, be kept in continual remembrance of the evil of sin; and by

some new bond be bound to his good behaviour for the time to come, and not be encouraged by an absolute and unlimited pardon, to think that pardon of past sins is a licence to sin again, or a discharge from the obligation of the Law by which he was bound to serve and honour his Maker.

§. V. Our own reason cannot chuse but say that all this might very well become the goodness and justice of God our Governour ; and let us see if all the world can think of a likelier way to effect all this, than that which our good God hath of his infinite wisdom chosen, and revealed to us in his Gospel. Observe what is read in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Chap. 3. 23, 24, &c. *I have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ; being justified freely by his Grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ : Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* Thi

The clear understanding of these words will shew us the reasonableness of God's dealings with us, as we are sinners, and upon what terms we may expect a pardon from him. Suppose then it be asked, in what condition all men are without *Christ*, we are here told, that *All have sinned*, all mankind, whether they be *Jews* that were under the law given by *Moses*, or *Gentiles* never obliged by that Law but by the *Law of Nature* *only*, they have all broken the Law under which they were, as the *Apostle* proves more fully in this Epistle, and so are all sinners. What now is the consequence of this universal corruption of mankind? It is this, that they are all *come short of the glory of God*. If we should here by *the glory of God*, understand the *Image of God* wherein man was created, we are all fallen short of it, that is, have less of it than was at first, as it consisted principally in wisdom and holiness. If by *glory* we understand the *glory and honour* due from us to *God*, we are come short of it, by sin we have robbed him of it; and are cast behind-hand in our duty, and unable to glorifie God in a perfect obedience to his law. If again by *glory*

glory, be meant the *praise* or *approbation* of God which he giveth to goodness, we are come short of it, we cannot please God, or do that which is acceptable unto him. Or if, *lastly*, we understand by *glory*, that *glory* which God bestoweth upon his obedient Subjects either in this or the future life, we are fallen short of it, having no righteousness of our own unto which it is due: We are by sin cast behind in our race to life and happiness, and so without a *Jesus*, must lose all, and perish eternally. Now following there shall be a *day of Judgment*, when every one of us must give an account of himself to God, and receiveth things he hath here done in the body whether it be good or bad, and the *reward* of his deeds, how shall any of us escape condemnation? What shall we then have to plead for our selves why the sentence of the Law should not be executed upon us? Or upon what account can we hope to be acquitted? The *Apostle* answereth this in the following words. *Being justified freely by his Grace. Just* by keeping the Law we are not, and therefore we cannot be *justified* or pronounced *just* by our just Judge on that account,

account, for so should he judge falsely. That Law therefore however it oblige us to duty, is not the law by which we shall be judged, for it requiring perfect obedience, and threatening death to the sinner, we having sinned, can hope for nothing but death if we be judged by that law, and cannot be justified or acquitted in judgment. It must be therefore by some act of *grace*, favour or pardon which God hath been pleased freely to grant unto us, and this is it that we must then plead for our selves, and wholly rely upon. But what is this *grace* which weare to trust to? Is it an utter abolishing or abrogating the Law? That cannot be, for that would be to leave us at liberty whether we would honour our Creator or no, or obey his will. Is it an absolute pardon for the breach of that Law? Nor that neither, for that would but set us on even ground to begin the world anew, and set us to the same task which we want strength to perform; and so we should be but where we were before. That we may therefore see what this grace is, we are first to enquire upon what consideration it was given us. And here we are told, it was *through*

through the redemption that was in, or by, Jesus Christ: God the eternal Son of the Father condescending to be made Man, hath in our nature done the will of God, and to make satisfaction for our offences was content to die, a great price and ransome he hath paid for us, not Silver nor Gold, but his own most pretious blood; He hath offered unto God an expiatory Sacrifice for our sins, of so great worth and value, that it cannot now seem any disparagement to God's righteous Government, to admit sinners to favor again in consideration of it. It is he, Jesus Christ, who was by God, seeing well what men would do, fore-ordained before the foundation of the world. I Pe. 1. 20. As that onely Mediatour between God and men. I Tim 2. 5. By whose merits and mediation sinners might find mercy and acceptance with God. This gracious design of his, he did from the beginning, as he saw fit, declare unto the world not all at once, but by degrees, in promises and prophesies, in types and shadows, more or less darkly and obscurely, as he pleased, till the fulness of time should come, when he intended fully and clearly to reveal it.

More particularly, in the most *holy place*, or *Holy of Holies*, stood the *Ark* with the *Law* in it, the *covering* of which *Ark* was called the *Propitiatory*, and above it stood two *Cherubims* shadowing it with their Wings. This was a *Symbol* of God's gracious presence with his People, and (a) (a) Exod. hence was God wont to 25. 22. speak unto *Moses*, and give forth the sacred *Oracles*.

Here was the *High-Priest* to appear before God on the day of *Attonement*, and God did thus shew how he did accept of the *Sacrifices* offered for the attonement of sins, which did all serve to shadow forth unto them that one perfect *Sacrifice* which *Christ* was afterwards to offer once for all. Now, saith the *Apostle*, this same *Christ*, God hath now set forth to be a *Propitiation*, (so we read it) through faith in his blood. Now in the *Gospel*-days, the time prefixed by God being come, he hath propounded, or set forth before the eyes of men the very substance of those *shadows*, the *Anti-type* to all those *Types*, the Person of the *Son* to be the true *Propitiatory* (so it should be read) *Mercy-seat* or *Throne of Grace*, in and by whom

whom God doth manifest his gracious presence with men, he being the true *Immanuel, God with us*; *God manifested in the flesh, the Word made flesh and dweling among us*, in whom God is propitious, and favourable to us, and so far reconciled to sinners by the Sacrifice he hath offered, as to accept all to mercy in consideration of the bloud which he hath shed for the remission of sins. All, I say, that will believe the *bloud* of Christ to be the price of their Souls, and look upon it as the *bloud* of the Covenant, that everlasting Covenant, Heb. 13. 21 that better Covenant whereof Christ mediator. Heb. 8. 6. And so submit themselves to the terms of this Covenant, shall find mercy, notwithstanding all the sins that they have formerly committed. Now this course it hath pleased God to take, *To declare his righteousness for the remission of sins* that are past, through the forbearance of God: for herein we have a clear Demonstration of God's righteousness, as he is both the *just* and *gracious Governour* of mankind. Some might be apt to question how it could be consistent with the justice of God so long to suffer men to run on in sin both

Jews and Gentiles without bringing them to speedy punishment for the same : because judgment is not speedily executed, upon evil doers, Men are too apt to think God such an one as themselves. *Eccl. 8. 11.* regardless of right or wrng. But they are deceived, howsoever God is long suffering and slow to anger, yet he doth sufficiently declare his justice even whilst he magnifieth his mercy ; and whilst he useth much forbearance and patience towards sinners, that his forbearance, if possible, may lead them to repentence. *Rom. 2. 4.* Yet he is not negligent in his Government, or regardless of men's behaviour under his mercifull and gentle Government. He might unto some seem to have quite remitted the sins of those whom he had not yet punished, but it was no remission (nor indeed doth the word signifie any such thing) but onely a passing by, or a winking at : as it is said, *Act. 17. 30.* An over-looking their sins for the time, to see if they would repent and flieto the remedy promised. That this was the gracious design of God, men formerly might understand and see by the light held forth unto them in the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and as many,

many as had eyes to see did see it in the promise, though yet afar off. However now, since the promised *Messiah*, in whom they believed, and whom they expected, is come into the world, and hath done and suffered all those things which were foretold concerning him, now at this time, God hath hereby manifestly declared his *righteousness* in all that he hath done. He hath shewed abundantly that he is *just*, and would not suffer his Law to be broken with impunity, or grant a pardon to sinners without satisfaction for their offences: If they do not, a great price is paid to redeem them, the *blood* of the Spotless *Lamb* of God, and it is upon this very valuable consideration, that they are received to mercy: It appeareth then though God do *justify* or acquit them in Judgment, it is because they have an *ab-  
solute* *right* with the Father, even *Jesus Christ* the *righteous*, and he is the *Propitiation* for their sins, *1 Joh. 2. 2.* His Person is of such dignity, and his merits so great, that he hath well deserved that God should do all this for his sake: And it is farther plain, that God hath not granted any absolute pardon to all sinners, but he hath

hath condescended to treat with them upon new and easier terms of agreement, he hath established a new *Covenant* of grace, and hath given unto Christ all those who shall enter into this *Covenant* and faithfully keep it. He is thus the *justifier of all them that believe in, or that are of the Faith of Jesus*, that continue in this *Covenant*, as well faithfull to him, as confiding in him. In short, Christ hath obtained this grace and favour for us, that we shall not now be judged by the *Law of Innocence*, and according to the first *Covenant* of works, *but by the Law of Faith*, Rom. 3. 17. which is the *Law of Liberty*. Jam. 1. 25. Wherein, though there be no allowance to sin, yet there is provision made for mercy, by an abatement of the rigor of the Law, and making allowances for our infirmities, and accepting of repentence and sincerity for Christ's sake. We see now how *this grace is given us in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. 1. 9. And that there is *no coming unto the Father but by him*. Joh. 14. 6.

§. VI. 2. Yet is not this all, for as we wanted a *pardon*, as we were guilty persons,

persons, so also do we need a *Physician*, as we are *sick*, and a *cleanser*, as we are *filthy* and *polluted*. We are all *unclean*, and the *decree* is gone forth and cannot be *reversed*, *Without holiness man shall see the Lord*. Heb. 12. 14. *They shall in no wise enter into the New Jerusalem any thing that defileth*. Rev. 21. 22. Every unclean or *sinfull* thing is *odious* and an *abomination* unto God, as being most contrary to the *purity* of his nature. Fire and Water may better agree together, than Man's *uncleanness* and God's *infinite purity*. *He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity*. Hab. 1. 13. Therefore doth he command us all *to be holy as he is holy*. 1 Pe. 1. 16. And it is the *blessing* that belongeth to the *pure in heart*, *to see God*, Mat. 5. 8. *Whosoever therefore hath this *image* in him, of seeing God, is to purifie himself even as he is pure*, 1 Joh 3. 3. Consider we *holiness*, first, as it is a great part of *Heaven's happiness*, as it is the *restoring* of *God's Image* in us, and as it is the *perfecting* of our nature; or consider it as it is that *quality* and *temper* of *Soul*, which alone can dispose us and render us capable of enjoying *comple-*  
*cential*

centially, or delighting our selves in the presence of a most *Holy God*; it is very plain, that Heaven it self can be no Heaven to us without it. But now, how shall sinfull men attain to this necessary Holiness? Can a sinner, whose sinfulness is become even a second nature to him, purifie or cleanse himself? *How can be be clean that is born of a Woman?* Job 25. 4. *Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* Prov. 20. 9. No man living can say this with any colour of truth. But here again must we be fain to flee unto *Jesus Christ*. In him alone is the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. Zech. 13. 1. *It is he that is made of God unto us both righteousness and sanctification.* 1 Cor. 1. 30. They that are Sanctified, are Sanctified in *Christ Jesus*. 1 Cor. 1. 2. He gave himself for his Church that he might Sanctifie it, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. Eph. 5. 26. The *Holy Spirit* of God which is our *Sanctifier*, and can make us holy, is the *Spirit of Christ* and is given unto us in and through Christ. If we have not this *Spirit of Christ*, we are none of his, Rom 8, 9. And hereby know we that he abideth in us, by the *Spirit*

Spirit which he hath given us, 1 Joh. 3. 4  
 We are sanctified and justified in the name  
 of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 6. 11. So then we can  
 have no hope of being saved and brought  
 to our everlasting rest by Christ, except  
 we receive of him both Pardon and  
 holiness. However we consider ourselves  
 to be laden, it is Christ alone can give  
 rest. Which was our third point.

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## CHAP. IV.

THE fourth is this. All they that  
 are laden with sin are freely invited  
 Christ unto himself. This is a very com-  
 fortable Doctrine indeed, that there  
 no man living, how great a sinner so-  
 ever he hath been, or yet is, but he may  
 have free access unto Christ as his Saviour  
 if he will come unto him for salvation.  
 Christ freely inviteth us all, he excepteth  
 not the very worst of us all, he maketh  
 the same promise of rest unto all, b  
 the burden we now carry be never  
 heavy.

heavy. Unless therefore we could find a man in the world that is no sinner, one that is above the common fate of mankind, and so hath nothing of that guilt and pollution upon his person and nature, which we all derive from *Adam*, we cannot find a man, of whom we can say, that he hath no invitation to come unto *Christ* for rest. If such a man could possibly be found, we must needs except him, for very true it is which *Christ* hath told us, saying, *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repen-*  
*tance.* Matt. 9. 13. He said this to those that had a very great opinion, but a very false one, of their own righteousness; and he said it to clear himself of the imputation of unrighteousness which they endeavour'd to fasten upon him, for his so freely conversing with *Pub-*  
*licans* and *Sinners*: he came to be our *Physician* to heal us, and saith he, v. 12. *They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.* In neither of these sayings did he suppose that any were *whole* or *righteous*, and stood in no need of his help, but he intimateth that he came to offer health to all, even the most desperately sick, and therefore con-

conversed with the very worst of them to shew he excepted none, nor should any perish for want of a Physician only such as those proud *Pharisees*, that in confidence of their own righteousness rejected his mercy, should die in their sins, not for want of, but for despising a Saviour. *He justifieth the ungodly.* Rom.

4. 5. Those that have not a legal righteousness of their own to plead, but examined and tried by the law of innocence, or by the Law of Moses, shall certainly be found great sinners and ungodly Persons, he came to shew them a new way whereby they might obtain mercy and be acquitted. sinners then and ungodly men he calleth and inviteth unto him, not excepting the very worst among them. *This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* faith St. Paul. 1 Tim. 1. 15. It is certain truth, and to him that considereth his own condition, must needs be very acceptable and welcome. St. Paul indeed had been a very great sinner, he had violently persecuted them that called on the name of Christ, he compe-

them to blaspheme, and was exceeding mad against them. Act. 26. 11. And when the blood of the Martyr Stephen was shed, he also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. Act. 22. 20. Yet he obtained mercy, yea, For this cause, saith he, I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. 1 Tim. 1. 16. He was thus made a monument of mercy to all future ages, that all sinners, reading or hearing of his conversion might be encouraged thereby, not to abuse the long-suffering of Christ by continuing in sin in hope of future mercy, but how vile soever they have formerly been, not to despair of finding the like acceptance, if they do, as St. Paul did, hearken unto the call and invitation of Christ.

God did never leave men without sufficient evidence of his readiness to accept of all penitent sinners. Hear what he said of old by his Prophet. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should dye, saith the L O R D G O D, and not that he should turn from his way and live? Ezek.

18. 23. He answereth his own question to the full satisfaction of poor disconsolate sinners. *As I live, saith the LORD GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* Ezek. 33. 11. Thus did God of old assure men by his Oath, that he delighteth in mercy. And he hath left this upon record for ever, for the encouragement of all sinners and wicked men, not to go on in their sins one moment in hope of mercy, but to turn from their evil ways speedily by a thorough repentance. And he encourageth us thus to doe, by declaring unto us the exceeding goodness of his nature, and his easiness to be reconciled to every one that turneth unto him. God's goodness is the very name whereby he would be known unto the world. The LORD, the LORD GOD merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. Exod. 34. 6,7. A God ready to pardon, gracious and mercifull, slow to anger and of great kindness. Nehem. 9. 17. He is gracious unto man, and saith, deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found

found a ransome. Job 33. 24. Did God declare himself to be thus gracious in the days of old only? Hath he now forgotten to be gracious in the days of the *Gospel*? Was his name *J E H O V A H* good and gracious? And shall we not think his name *J E S U S* is so too? Can there be a more comfortable name than *God our Saviour*? Is not the *Gospel* all *glad* *tydings* of mercy and goodness? Said not the *Angel* at the birth of *CHRIST*, *Behold I bring you glad tydings of great joy which shall be to all people: For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is CHRIST the LORD?* Luke 2. 10, 11. *God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.* Joh. 3. 17. *To bring men to repent and turn to God for Salvation through Christ is the very design of the Gospel. That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.* Luke 24. 47. *Is there any man excepted in the whole Gospel from pardon, but he alone who shall exclude himself, and will not accept of it as it is there tendered unto him? Is it not said expressly that Christ was to taste of death for*

every man? Heb. 2. 9. And that this is good and acceptable in God's sight, that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Accordingly we find, that Christ ceaseth not to send abroad his Messengers continually to call and invite in his name, to woe, intreat, beseech with all earnestness, and by all convincing arguments to persuade, and even *compel* men, without exception of any, to repent, and come in and accept of mercy; yea to help and lead and support them, and to doe all things for them that they can reasonably desire to fit and prepare them for acceptance. To preach and proclaim the good will of God towards them, to hold forth unto them, even to the blindest Heathen amongst them, the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in him. Act. 26. 18. He gave his Apostles a very full and unlimited Commission: Go, saith he, into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature;

he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark 16. 15. We must needs therefore acknowledge the truth of what the Apostle hath so plainly told us, that *The grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* Tit.

2. 11, 12, 13. As God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, this was that forbearance of God, and remission or overlooking of Sins past before mentioned: so, that men might be still sensible of this wonderfull goodness, he bath, saith the Apostle, committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he bath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20, &c. Whosoever will, saith Christ, let him take of the water of life freely. Rev. 22. 17.

Him that cometh to me I will in no wise  
 cast out. Joh. 6. 37. What can we now  
 expect more than all this to assure us  
 that all laden sinners without exception  
 are invited unto Christ? And shall it not  
seem strange, that men will rather sit  
down and study for nice distinctions  
whereby to limit the goodness of God,  
and null the universality of his grace,  
and rob themselves and others of the  
comfort thereof, rather than yield to  
the plain words of Scripture? Certainly  
 men may sin against the *Gospel* as well  
 as against the *Law*, and to reject the  
*Gospel* and not embrace it as the *Power*  
 of God unto *Salvation*, is to sin against  
 the *Gospel*: nay, I think, it is very sure,  
 that no man shall perish but for rejecting  
 or disobeying the *Gospel* of Christ; but  
if the *Gospel* of Christ, if pardon of sin  
through Christ be not freely offered to  
all men, they at least to whom it is not  
offered, sin not in refusing of it. If the  
 wickedest man do sin when he believeth  
 not or disobeyeth the *Gospel*, and for  
 this sin shall be damned, it is plain that  
 the *Gospel* was offered unto him, that  
 he was invited to the mercies of it. But  
 what now is required of us that we may  
 reap

reap the benefit of this invitation, and may be made partakers of this loving kindness of the *Lord*? This will be answered in the next proposition.

## C H A P. V.

## SECT. I.

OUR next lesson we are to learn is  
th斯. *Whoever will have that rest, unto which he is invited by Christ, must come unto Christ.* That which we need, and He hath promised is *rest*; but we must *move* before we *rest*. Sitting down under our load will not ease us: much less will running from *Christ* by our disobedience to his *Gospel* ease us, which way soever we goe; but we must *come unto him*. This is all that *Christ* requireth of us; this is the great duty that is incumbent upon us, as we are *Christians*, to *come unto Christ*. It is not the work of an hour, or a day; but of the whole life. It concerneth us therefore to un-

derstand it well, seeing upon the doing of it the success doth wholly depend. If we do it not, or if we do it wrong: if we come not to Christ, or if we come a wrong way, we miss what we would have, and lose our labour. It is therefore now our task to learn what this *coming* signifieth. *Coming* is *Believing*: and to *come to Christ*, is to *believe in Christ*. This we learn from *Christ* himself who is the soundest interpreter of his own words. To learn this we shall need to do no more but mind his discourse in one *Chapter*, Joh. 6. It is there said v. 5. *That a great company came unto him*. Here is no figure, these came unto him to see him and hear him, and were miraculously fed by him with a very few Loaves. This entertainment pleased them so well, that after he was departed thence to another place, they followed him. And thus there be very many that are willing enough to *come unto Christ*, and follow him for his *loaves*; that is, they are willing to be accounted *Christians*, and they make a plausible profession and shew of being his disciples and followers, and all this is because of those temporal advantages and

and priviledges they reap and enjoy in the places where they live, where no other Religion is countenanced by Law. But such a *coming* as this will bring no man to *rest* in *Christ*. Therefore v. 7. He telleth these his followers, that if they will come unto him to purpose, they must *not* labour for *the meat* which *perisheth*, but for *the meat* which *endureth unto everlasting life*. And that they might not be ignorant how to come unto him for this *meat*, he explaineth this *coming to him* by *believing on him*, v. 35. *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst*. Whereas *hungering* and *thirsting* are all one in sense, so are *coming* and *believing*. Again to the same persons he saith, v. 36. *Ye have seen me and believe not*. But saith he, v. 37. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, that is, shall believe in me*, which ye, though you now see me, do not. *Coming* therefore and *believing* are the same thing. And is this now *all* that *Christ* requireth of us, that we may have *rest*, onely that we *believe in him*? This is all: for *God so loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son, that*

E 5.      *whosoever*.

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Joh. 3. 16. If this be all, then many wicked men begin to flatter themselves, that they are safe enough. What though they be wicked, yet Christ died for the *ungodly*, and calls for no more, but to believe, and we, say they, can believe this as well as others, and therefore we are as sure as others to have *rest* by Christ, our *faith*, which is the onely thing required of us, will save us. But we must take heed that we conclude not too hastily. To come is to believe, that's true: and he that believeth shall be saved, that's true too. But we must know what this *believing* importeth, how much it containeth in it, before we can conclude that we believe unto Salvation. It is not any kind of *Faith* that will bring a man to rest. The Devils ~~do~~ believe, and what are they the better for that? Have they any hopes of being saved by their *faith*? No, they know the contrary, and therefore they tremble. Jam. 2. 19. Simon Magus the Sorcerer believed, Act. 8. 13. yet was he a condemned *Heretick*. There is a ~~bad~~ <sup>bad</sup> *faith* which worketh not, Jam. 2. <sup>26</sup> And

And there is a *living* or *lively* faith which is in a man as a principle of new life, and of a lively spiritual motion carrying the Soul unto *Christ* and after *Christ*. We must therefore be carefull that we mistake not the one of these for the other.

¶. II. We *believe* a thing, when we are persuaded it is true. So when *Christ* telleth us that he is the *Messiah* or *Christ*, that he is *true God*, the *only* begotten *Son of the Father*; that he is *true man* also, the *Son of a pure Virgin*; that he *died* for us on the *Cross*, and *rose again the third day*, and is *gone up into Heaven*, and *sitteth at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us*, and that he *will come again to judge the quick and the dead*; That *whoever believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned*: All this we take to be *true*, and so are said to *believe* it. Thus far we do well, and it is our duty. And this is a *true faith*, and a *necessary faith*. But this is not *all*, and it is but a part of our duty, and is not that which is meant by *coming unto Christ*, the

the *faith* whereby we are *justified* and  
saved, and find *rest*.

Some there may be, who think they believe aright upon another ground; they do not onely believe these doctrinal truths, but they believe them with a particular application of them to themselves. They say, they are per- suaded, that they are God's *elect Children, predestinated, called, adopted in Christ Jesus*, that they are *justified*, and that their sins are forgiven already, and that they shall assuredly be saved: That they have not the least doubting in themselves of all this, but can confidently thus *apply Christ*, and all that he hath done and suffered, to themselves, and can confide in him as their *Saviour*, and comfort themselves in this persuasion, being come up, as they suppose to the *fulness* of *faith*, or full assurance of their *Salvation by Christ*. This is indeed a *faith*, and a *believing*; but it may be a *false faith*, and the *believing* of a *lie*. They that say, they believe all this, may yet have no sound reason or sufficient ground for believing it; all this confidence may be built quicly upon their own vain imaginations, and

and so it is a believing in themselves, and not in Christ. Though therefore it may be true, that they do believe all this, yet all this that they do believe may be false: and be sure of this, that no man is justified by believing a falsehood, or a meer fiction of his own brain. Nay, yet more; suppose we, that they do not onely groundlesly believe this, but that the thing be really true which they thus believe, yet is not this that *Faith* whereby a man is *justified*, it is not that *coming to Christ*, unto which *rest* is assured. For if a man be not justified before he believeth he is justified, he believeth he is justified when he is not, and so believeth a falsehood, and that cannot justifie him. And if he be justified before he believe he is justified, and whosoever is justified be justified by *Faith*, then is he not justified by this latter *Faith*, whereby he believeth himself to be justified, but by a *Faith* which went before that. He that believeth, that he is *come to Christ*, either is *come to Christ*, when he so believeth, or he is not: if he be not then *come to Christ*, he believeth that to be, which is not; that is, he believeth a falsehood:.

shood : and if he be already *come* *Christ*, it is plain his believing this af-  
 ward did not bring him to *Christ* : no  
 it is *coming* unto *Christ* to which *ref*  
 promised, and not to a man's believ-  
 that he is come to him. We can-  
 believe we are justified, but we mu-  
 believe that we are *believers*, because  
 onely *believers* are justified ; and to  
 lieve we are *believers*, is to believe  
 have true justifying *Faith* which we mu-  
 have, before we can believe truly that  
 we have it, and therefore this believ-  
 that we have it is not it. Hence  
 plain, that though to be perswade  
 that we are justified and have pe-  
 with God, may be much of that mu-  
 which God sometimes giveth here  
 this life to those that are *come* *unto*  
*Christ* ; yet it cannot be that *Faith*  
 whereby we are said to *come*. Be-  
 justified by *Faith*, saith St. Paul, we have  
 peace with God through our Lord *Jesus*  
*Christ*, Rom. 5. 1. No man can de-  
 but the *sense* of this peace with God in  
 man's own conscience, is a very sweet  
 and comfortable rest unto his Soul ; and  
 the stronger his perswasion is, that he  
 hath this peace, the more at rest he

must needs be within himself. But then it is easie enough to conceive, that such a sense or rest must follow that *peace*, and that *peace* followeth *justification*, and *justification* is by *Faith*; and this *Faith* is our *coming to Christ*.

§ III. Seeing now this *Faith* is neither a bare believing the truth, nor a strong perswasion of man's own good state or condition, let us now enquire wherein it consists, or what indeed it is. This we shall be best able to discern, by beholding it in that most eminent and highly commended example of a believer *Abraham*, for by *Faith* was he *justified*, and his *Faith* is said to be imputed to him for righteousness. *And they which are of Faith, the same are the Children of Abraham, and are blessed with faithfull Abraham.* Gal. 3. 6, 7, & 9. Observe then but what kind of *Faith* *Abraham* had, and that kind of *Faith* must ours be. We shall observe this *Faith* of *Abraham* in three instances only at this time. The first is this; God biddeth *Abraham* go out of his Country, from his Kindred and his Father's House into a strange Land of which he knew nothing,

nothing, promising to make him a great Nation and to bless him, Gen. 12. 1, &c. *And Abraham, saith the Apostle, went out, not knowing whither he went, Heb. 11. 8.* Here we see his *Faith*, he was so well satisfied with God's word of *promise*, and was so firmly perswaded of his truth and faithfulness, that he made no scruple at all of yielding a *present* obedience to his word of *command*: he, without all dispute, left his friends, his home, his present enjoyments and hope in his own *Country* and his Father's *House*, and followed *God*, though he knew not whither, nor what difficulties he might meet with by the way, he trusted *God* with all. The *second instance* is this: *God* promiseth *Abraham* to give him a *Son* of *Sarah* his *Wife*, when she was barren, and both of them were now grown old, and that he would multiply his *Seed* into many *Nations*, even as the *Stars* of *Heaven*, and to bless all *Nations* in his *Son*. *And Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.* Gen 15. 6. Here again was *Abraham's Faith*, That even against *hope* he believed in *him*, that he might become the *Father of many Nations*.

Nations. He considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's Womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in Faith, giving glory to God. And being fully perswaded that what he had promised he was able to perform. And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Rom. 4 18, &c. Thirdly, Now when God had given *Abraham* this Son which he had promised him, he commandeth him to take this very Son, his *only Son Isaac whom he loved*, this very Son in whose Seed he had promised that *all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*, and to offer him up unto God for a burnt-offering. Gen. 22. 2. Here was a very hard task indeed, a work commanded to be done, which might seem to undoe all that was hoped for, and make void at one blow all the promises that God had made him. Consider but a few of the circumstances, and it will appear to be so. First, it is against nature for a Father to kill his own Child, and with his own hand too. How should *Abraham* so cast off the Nature of a Man, and be so inhumane, as to

to Butcher his Son ? *Secondly*, he was his *beloved* Son, one that had been a *deitifull* Child, and of whom he was very tender, yea the Son of his *old Age*, and it is usual with old Parents to be very fond of their young Children, as those little Images of themselves in whom they hope to live in the memory of future Ages when they themselves are gone hence. How should *Abraham* pull out the bowels of Fatherly love and natural affection, as to kill the beloved Son of his *old Age*? *Thirdly*, *Sarab* had been long barren, and *Abraham* grown old without Children, and even past all hopes in the ordinary course of nature to have a Child, how must both he and his *Wife* be overjoyed at the birth of a Son and heir, beyond all their expectations ? And how could *Abraham* induce to cut off all their joy and comfort in such a Son at one stroke with his bloody *Knife*? *Lastly*, which was more than all this, *Isaac* was the Son of the promise given by a kind of miracle, and a special token of God's favour, and how should it not go against his heart to part with such a signal blessing and token of God's love ? And it was promised that

his Seed should be as the Stars of Heaven, and that all Nations should be blessed in it ; and how could this be made good, if Isaac must be Sacrificed ? God had given him no new promise of another Son, in whose Seed he would make this good. And how should Abraham hope ever to see this promise performed, except he could think a Generation of men should spring up out of his Son's bloud shed upon the earth ? Now behold the Faith of Abraham in full strength and glory : He disputeth not with himself how these things could be, but being commanded by God, readily goeth to doe his commands, leaving the issue to God, not doubting but whilst he did his part, God would do his own. Obedience was Abraham's part and duty, the promise was God's, and Abraham troubleth not his head with it any more than to believe it, how it would be fulfilled was not his business to contrive, let God see to that. Thus, saith the Apostle, *He that had received the promises offered up his onely Son ; accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, Heb. 11. 17, & 19.* Though he had received such promises, as now in all humane probability.

probability he could see no likely way of fulfilling, yet such confidence had he in God, whose ability to doe all things he well understood, that he made no question of it, but God would find a way to make good his word, though it should be by raising up again this same Son in life, whom he had now commanded him to offer up in Sacrifice. *Seest thou now, saith St. James, how Faith wrought with his works, and by works was he made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, and it was imputed him for righteousness, Jam. 2. 22, 23.*

§. IV. In this illustrious example of Faith, we may see what it is to *come to Christ*, and to *believe in him*. Do stedfastly believe that Jesus is that Messiah, the Son of the living God, that was promised to come into the world to be the Saviour of sinners? Do we believe that he hath done and suffered all that was required of him as our Redeemer and the Mediator of the new Covenant of grace, and that God hath accepted his Sacrifice for us, and hath made his bead over all things to his Church, and put all things into his hand, and his

made him our *King* and *Governour*, and  
 that in his *Gospel* he hath declared unto  
 us the tenure and contents of this *Cove-  
 nant*, and all the terms on which we  
 may be saved? And do we believe that  
 all God's promises in him are *Yea* and  
*Amen*, sure and irrevocable, and shall be  
 made good to a tittle? Doth the belief  
 of these things work in us true thankfull-  
 ness for this unspeakable mercy, and in-  
 flame our hearts with great love to the  
 Authour of all this goodness, and by  
 this love work in us an hearty willing-  
 ness and desire to obey him, and please  
 him in all things, and to this end do  
 we engage our selves seriously in this  
 holy *Covenant*? Do we stumble at no  
 difficulties or frightfull appearances in  
 our way, but whatsoever at present  
 we may seem to lose by it, or how hard-  
 ly soever we think we must come by the  
 things that God hath promised, yet we  
 betake our selves to *Christ*, as our onely  
*Saviour* from death, and instructour in  
 the way of life, and protectour against  
 all enemies, and conductour to eternal  
 glory, in a resolute and shearfull obser-  
 vance of his rules, and constant keeping  
*Covenant* with him, even in the se-  
 verest

verest branches of it. When Christ in his *Gospel* calleth us to himself, telling us he is willing to be our Saviour, and to give us his *Holy Spirit* to be our Sanctifier, and will bring us to his *Father* as our eternal happiness. Do we verily believe all this so assuredly that we dare venture our life and Salvation upon it, and trust him with all our concerns, ~~me~~ doubting of his fidelity? And when he goeth on farther to tell us that if we will have these benefits of a *Saviour*, we must repent of all our sins, and change both our *hearts* and *lives*; and be ready, ~~need~~ be, to leave *Father* and *Mother*, *all Relations, Houses and Lands* and *worldly profits and advantages*; ~~and~~ *by our selves*, and not regard our own *carnal wills* nor *desires*, our *safer*, ~~each~~ *honour* or *life* it self, but be very chearfully willing to *take up the Cross* and bear it after him, suffering any ~~loss~~ *shame*, *pain* or *death* for his sake: when we hear all this, we stagger not through unbelief, but our firm belief of his promises, and sense of our obligations to him make us set light by all these things: If we make no question, but he will be full as good as he hath said;

and,

and, in confidence of his faithfulness, deliberately and resolvedly enter into his *Covenant*, purposing and endeavouring unfeignedly to keep it, then do we truly *come unto Christ*, and *believe* in *Christ*. We believe that he by his bloody death hath attoned our sins, and we trust to God's mercy, through that *Sacrifice*, onely, for our pardon. We believe that he hath taught us the good will of his *Father*, and the onely way to life, and we apply our selves with all earnest care and diligence to learn it and to doe it. We believe him to be our chief *King*, *Lord* and *Governour*, and we give our selves to learn his *Laws*, to obey them, to fight his Battels, to doe the work he puts us to, and to be content with the condition he placeth us in, with all patience expecting and waiting for the accomplishing of his promises in his own time. And this is to believe unto *Salvation*. And *justifying Faith*, is an hearty compliance with the *Gospel* of *Jesus Christ*, trusting our *Souls* in his *hand*. He that thus *cometh to Christ* shall find *rest*.

## C H A P. VI.

## S E C T. I.

**B**UT no man will thus come ~~unto~~ Christ, but he that is truly sensible of the weight of sin, and heartily desirous to be eased of it. Without this sense and desire, there cannot be in us a willingness to come, and without these we cannot hope for a welcome with Christ. The call or invitation is to all that are laden with sin, as hath been shew'd, but who can make this invitation so prevalent with us, as to embrace it, if we find in our selves no want or need of that in which we are invited? Or how can we imagine Christ should bid them welcome, who love their sins better than that which he inviteth them unto, and have no desire to part with them? Christ calls unto those that labour and are ~~bur~~ <sup>bur</sup>dened. Which words are to be understood by the help of a figure often used in Scripture, and are to be construed to this purpose, ye that labour of ~~bur~~ <sup>bur</sup>dened.

ing heavy laden, or are sick and weary of your burden. You that feel the load heavy, and so heavy, that you are loath to carry it any longer ; but are willing to hearken to any way whereby you may be freed from it, ill at ease in your mind, till you be delivered from this slavery.

If it be not thus with us, we shall be loath to be at much pains to be rid of it, and will not much thank him, or own any great obligation laid upon us by him that shall take it off. Suppose that the ablest *Physician* in the world be come to Town, and altogether as charitable as he is skilfull ; and shall, in charity to the sick, send forth his Servant to give notice of his coming, together with a kind invitation to all the sick of any disease, to come to his lodging, and he will cure them freely, and ask nothing for his pains. All the sick, you hear, are freely invited, he excepteth not any of them, though it should be the *Plague* or foulest disease in the world they are sick of. And all that he requireth of them is to come to him and accept of his kindness. Now, though some others will, it may be, come, out of a curious desire they have to see this famous man,

or to talk and dispute with him, or that they may have something to talk of; and though they may talk much and very well of him to one another, yet they onely will come unto him for his help, who suppose themselves sick and have a great desire to be well. Others will not lose the benefit of their worldly labours, no nor the pleasure of their recreations, much less will they be at the trouble to follow his directions, to fast and abstain from such pleasant meane and drinks as they love, or to take the bitter Pills and Potions he giveth, or to suffer those cuttings and scarifyings and other painfull means he ordereth. There must be then in all that come to Christ these two things. 1. *A sense of their sins and of the evil of them.* 2. *A desire to be delivered from them.*

I. There must be in us a true and deep sense of our sinfulness and sad condition, wherein we are by reason of it. For why should we seek after a *Saviour*, if we be not sensible that we need one? How we are all *laden*, and how *heavy* our load is, we have seen before. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

we confess our sins he is faithfull, and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I Joh. 1. 8, 9. No man will trouble himself to sue for a pardon, that taketh himself to be no offender. However, I suppose, there be but a very few who are so wholly deluded and blinded by *Satan*, as to think themselves altogether without sin; yet, it is to be feared, there be very many so hardened by sin, as not to be throughly sensible either of the weight or number of their sins. Many there be who will not by any arguments be perswaded to esteem those things in themselves to be sins, or not to think them vertues, ornaments and rare embellishments, which are indeed very great and foul sins: many again that see them as sins, yet are apt to count them but tolerable infirmities, light blemishes, and, as they call them, *venial* sins, such as shall be pardon'd of course, without any endeavour of amendment, which are indeed very grievous and deadly sins. Most of us are too apt to overlook and set light by the original corruption of our nature, which if it must not be quite removed in this

life, yet must be much corrected, abated, and resisted, or it will destroy us: We are not commonly so observant of our secret *aversions* from God and *goodness*, or of our inward *inclinations* to *evil* as we should be. Men are prone to

- think they have but little weight upon their Souls, so long as they can abstain from those grosser *Acts* of wickedness which common honesty is ashamed of. Omissions of duty, neglect of doing all the good we can, and improving our *Talents* by use, and imperfections of heart, and coldness of affections, and such like, are but little minded by the most. If this were not so, we should not daily see so great a multitude of all sorts of sinners go singing along the broad way that leadeth to destruction with so much pleasure and lightsomeness, when it is most plain to all those who have their eyes open to see them and the ways they walk in, that they go laden with sin all the day long, and without taking any notice of it, or labouring by repentance and prayer to ease themselves of it, can go to sleep in their Beds at night, lying down with the same heavy load upon them. It would certainly mar their

their mirth, and disturb their rest, and banish sleep from their eyes, or fill their heads with frightfull dreams, were their case but half so well known to themselves, as it is visible to others. If therefore we would have true rest, we must press home the heavy weight, which we have already seen to be in sin, upon our consciences by considering it together with all its aggravations, even till we perceive it to become intollerable to us. We must study the Law that forbiddeth and discovereth our sins, and we must consider the curses which are therein denounced against sinners, and on these things must we meditate even till they break our hearts, *a broken and a contrite heart being a Sacrifice which God will not despise.* Psal, 51. 17. We must search our hearts to the very quick, even till they become sore and very tender, and feel the smart of sin, and are not able to endure it any longer. Till we feel the sting of the fiery Serpent, wherewith we are bitten, we will not be carefull to look up to what was typified by that *brazzen Serpent* in the Wilderness, *Jesus Christ* lifted up upon the *Cross* for our healing. We must

be very sensible both of the *guilt* and of the *pollution* of sin before mentioned.

§. II. 1. We must labour to be very sensible of our *guilt*, as we are horious offenders, breakers of the righteous law of *God*, and obnoxious to eternal damnation. How that by no means we can escape *God's wrath* without the reconciliation wrought by *Jesus Christ*. The bond must be cancelled with his bloud, or the debt must be paid to the utmost farthing. We should strive all we can to feel the dreadfulness of that which is like to come upon us and be our portion for ever. *Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.*  
 2 Thes. 1. 9. *Everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Matt. 25. 41. O dreadfull words ! Had we but a right understanding of them, and were the full import of them duly imprinted on our hearts by a serious consideration of the evils they signifie. This we must endeavour for, even till we find the thoughts hereof quite to sink all our vain confidence, and to bring us to despair in our selves, or of safety any other way than by *Christ*. Till we conclude that

that if we be left by God to stand upon our own Legs without a *Saviour* to rest our hearts upon, our burden must needs be altogether unsupportable, and we must fall and perish irrecoverably.

2. But then we must also labour to come to a true sight and sense of the *foulness* of our sins, as they are the defacing of *God's Image*, the shame and disgrace of our humane nature, the only things that could turn *Angels* into *Devils*, and *Men* into *Beasts*, as contrary to the pure nature of God, and all that is honest and laudable, as darkness is to light. Consider how many washings and purifications were of old appointed to mind men of this pollution, and let the *Font* wherein we were *Baptized* be a continual remembrancer to us of the same. Let us remember that all the promises of God should move us to cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit and to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Sin* and *uncleanness* are one thing in the language of the Scripture, as Zech. 13. 1. and elsewhere. Hereby are we loathsome and abominable to the *Holy God*, and therefore must learn to abhor our selves in dust

and ashes as most vile and unclean things, *Loathing our selves in our own sight for our iniquities, and for our abominations, ashamed and confounded for our own ways.* Ezek. 36. 31, 32. Thus are we to consider the foulness of our load, that we may be thoroughly humbled and abased in our own thoughts. And

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§. III. 2. That we may be indeed *weary* of our sinfull selves, as we are now a burden to our selves. That we may find no quiet in our Souls, till we find out a way to put off the old Man. Can any man be willing to be prest to death, though the weight that lieth upon him were in it self never so pretious? But is it possible a man should be willing to be choak'd in a Dung-hill or a Jake? Can a man chuse but be weary of that which he feeleth, both painfull, shamefull and destructive? Many are willing to go groaning under very heavy and galling burdens to get some profit, though it amount but to a poor lively-hood; but would these men carry such loads for nothing, but meerly to lame or kill themselves? And is not the load we now speak of such an unprofitable and

and deadly load ? What fruit ( saith the Apostle ) had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed ? the end of those things is death . Rom. 6. 21. Shall not any man in his wits be heartily desirous to part with such a load ? It is the Devil our enemy that holds us in this slavery, is it an honour to be coveted to be the Devil's Porter or Pack-horse ? It is sin and corruption we are laden with, and is it a desirable employment to carry dirt and nastiness, to be ranked among the dung-carts ? Strange it is to see the haughtiness and monstrous pride of ambitious Spirits stoop so contentedly to such a vile drudgery . A Gentleman or Woman would take it very disdainfully if a Ragman or Oyster-woman should desire their help in carrying their loads for them awhile to ease themselves : and yet think it no disparagement to their birth or quality to carry with them to their graves all that load of corruption they derive from *Adam*, and a thousand times more filth that they dayly lay upon themselves . Many that would take it very grievously, and storm exceedingly to be desired by their Cooks to assist them in dressing their

own dinners, are yet all the year long ready at the command or intreaty of the Devil to make provision for their flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof: as if they counted it their honour to carry any the vilest load, to drudge in any the servilest work, so they can but avoid Christ's easie yoke and light burden. Shall Christ now so cheaply rate his own bounty and goodness, as not onely beg us to accept of it, but also to force it upon those that in their greatest need, have no desire of it, but scorn and despise it? Shall he violently pull and tear off the load of sin from them who have so ill a will to part with it, that they hold hard and struggle with all their wicked strength to keep it? Is it to be expected he should strip men against their will, and force them in at the strait gate to happiness? Indeed he is graciously pleased of his infinite love, to use even much of this violence to bring men to a desire to part with what is hurtfull to them. He loads them with affections to make them hate their load of sins, he frustrates their vain hopes, disappoints them in their wicked projects, lets them be spoiled and robbed of things

things they love, to shew them the unconstancy of their worldly comforts, casteth them on their sick beds, to shew them the uselessness of earthly things in their greatest need of help and comfort. Thus *he bedgeth their way with thorns*, Hos. 2. 6. Bringeth them into very great difficulties and straits unconquerable by their own wit and strength, and all is to bring them to this desire of ease by him. As Elihu speaks, *If they be bound in Fetters, and holden in cords of affliction*: This is such a mercy as is used towards madmen to tame and bring them to their wits, it is *to shew them their work and their transgression that they have exceeded*; *to open their ear to discipline*, and warn them *that they return from iniquity. That they may obey and serve him, and spend their days in prosperity and their years in pleasure.* Job 36. 8, 9, &c. But if after all this, men will love their sin which God hates, and will not be brought to a hearty desire to part with it, they must take what it will bring upon them in the end. It is indeed a very contradiction to say a man can be happy in Heaven, and not desire to be eased of sin. The happiness of Heaven

consist

consisteth much in a freedom from all sin, and a rejoicing in this freedom, this is the *rest* Christ promiseth, and shall that man rejoice in his freedom from sin, that had no desire to part with it? Can a man rejoice and think himself happy in a freedom which he bath no love for? Neither must this desire to be eased of our load, be onely a desire to be freed from the pain it puts us to, but from the load it self: for otherwise it would be onely a desire to carry it with ease and pleasure, such as all wicked men have. As a covetous man that carrieth on his shoulders a great weight of gold is weary of the weight, but not of the gold; he can wish it lighter, but he cannot wish it less. As a drunken man the next day is weary of his qualms and headach, but he is not weary of excessive drinking; he is weary of the pain, but not of the sin; he could wish it were more wholesome, and less shamefull, and less costly, but he would not be abridged of it. A Thief hath a desire not to be found out, nor disgraced, and most of all not to be hanged; but he hath no desire to be honest. Such a desire is not accepted

accepted by *Christ*, nor is there any reason it should, for it is no desire to be free from what he hateth, but onely from what we hate or fear, and we could well be content to carry that about us still which is odious and dishonourable to him, so we might be freed of what is painfull to us. In effect, it is to wish that *Christ* would love sin as well as we do, or at least that he would give us leave to dishonour him by it, and not punish us for it. In short we must chiefly desire to be eased of sin, as it is odious and dishonourable to *God*, and out of that filial respect we owe to him more than out of love to our selves, though it is to the greatest and truest love we can have for our selves, who can onely be happy in honouring and enjoying *God*. When therefore we are weary and sick of sin, because it makes us unable to honour *God* as we ought, and so bends us downward that we cannot raise up our selves to delight in him, then are we weary of it indeed. When the sense of our vileness by sin hath begotten in us low thoughts of our selves, and hath so sufficiently depressed us as to lay us in the dust, in a true and seasonable

able humiliation of heart ; when it hath quite sunk us in our own esteem, so that we account our selves unworthy of the least of God's mercies : and are so weary of continuing in such a state, that we *bunger and thirst after righteousness*, then will we be willing to come and lay our selves at *Christ's* feet, that he may take off our load and raise us up again.

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## CHAP. VII.

OUR last point is this. *All that thus come unto Christ heartily desirous to be eased of their sins shall have rest.* I, saith Christ, *will give you rest.* This is it that a heavy laden and weary Soul should even naturally desire, and this is it, that such a Soul coming unto Christ shall assuredly receive. The mercy is suitable to its condition, and it is as sure for its comfort. *Christ* hath it in store for us, it is not to seek or purchase ; and he is as willing to bestow it, he will freely give it, we need not take any care to provide wherewith to buy it. His

power.

power is infinite, he is *very God of very God*, all power in Heaven and Earth is given unto him, *the Father hath put all things into his hands*, Joh. 3. 35. His goodness is also infinite, 'tis the goodness of God, as he cannot be deceived by us, so neither can he deceive us, it is against his nature, as he is the God of truth, to deal falsely. He is faithfull and cannot lie. *He is able to save all them to the utmost that come unto God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. And his word is given us, *those that come unto him be will not cast out*, Joh. 6. 37. That therefore which he hath promised is most sure. He hath sealed to his promise with his bloud. And what is it that he hath promised but rest? Even a threefold rest. 1. *From the guilt and punishment of sin.* 2. *From the power and dominion of sin.* And. 3. *From the working and being of sin.*

1. Christ will give unto all that thus come unto him a *rest from the guilt, punishment or condemnation of sin*, and this is that which is called *justification*. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, Rom. 8. 1. *Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect?*

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*It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* V. 33, 34. All our sins that ever we have committed, when we come unto Christ by a true and a living faith, such as hath been already described, shall be freely forgiven us, and we shall stand acquitted of them all before God. *He, saith Christ, that beareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.* John 5. 24. Our coming unto Christ is our passing over from a state of death and condemnation, into a state of life and salvation.

2. Christ will give all such as come unto him a rest from the Power and Dominion of Sin. Sin is in some measure in the best; and wherever it is, it will work; but in those that are come to Christ, it is but like the working of a Disease that is in a good measure cured, a man feels it to his trouble, but he is brought to that degree of health, that it prevaleth not to cast him down; he can go about the works of his calling, though

though not with that vigor and activity as he might do were he perfectly well. The *Dominion* of sin whereby it had us in *Subjection*, and had command of our will, so that we were willingly led by it, and took pleasure in it, is broken, and we are able to resist it, and subdue it in its motions? *Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.* Rom. 6. 6. *Sin shall not have Dominion over you.* v. 14. We need not let sin reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof, v. 12. But being made free from sin, we become servants unto God, having our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life. v. 22. This is our *Sanctification*.

3. Christ will give all that come unto him a final rest from Sin in all respects, so that it shall be quite done away, and shall be no more at all to create us any more trouble of any kind whatsoever. This shall be in our *Glorification*, when we come into those heavenly mansions John 14. 2. which our Lord is gone before to prepare for us; when he shall come

come to take us to himself, that where he is there we may be also. *Job. 14. 3.* Then shall there be no sin at all, no temptation to sin, no inclination to sin, none of all those numerous evils which now by reason of sin, we groan under. *God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.* *Rev. 21. 4.* Then shall there be a perfect and endless Sabbath of rest and joy in the glorious presence of God, when Christ shall say, *well done good and faithfull servant, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.* *Matt. 25. 21.* and, *Come ye blessed Children of my Father, inherite the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

Thus far have we seen the Doctrine of the Text, as it serveth to inform our understanding in matter both of faith and practice. And these things, very necessary to be distinctly known, and firmly believed, have we learned from it. That sin is a very grievous burden. God hates it, the world groans under it, we are both defiled and plagued

gued by it and for it. All mankind is laden with it, corrupted by it, and suffer many sad and heavy evils because of it, *Jesus Christ* alone can ease us of it, he alone by his bloody death hath procured our pardon, he alone by his holy Example and Gospel hath shew'd the way to heaven, he alone by his *Holy Spirit* can cleanse us and fit us for the presence of *God*. All men, not one excepted, are by Christ freely invited to himself, as he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, nothing lieth in our way that can necessarily hinder us, nothing can be thought on that ought to discourage us. All that would have ease by him, must take the pains to come unto him, and by a living faith working by love, must yield themselves intirely to him, resolvedly join, and constantly abide in covenant with him. In order hereunto they must be made sensible both of their danger and their vileness, count their sins a burden, and longingly desire to be delivered from them. Lastly, all that are so, may come with comfort and confidence, they shall have rest, be justified and acquitted from the punishment of sin, be sanctified more and

and more, and rescued from the dominion of sin, and finally glorified, and placed beyond the reach of sin in Eternal happiness.

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PART. II.

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## P A R T II.

IF we rightly understand and firmly believe what we have been told in the *former* part of this discourse, it will not sure be needfull to use many arguments in this *second* part to persuade us to accept of *Christ's* so gracious invitation. Can it seem any hard task to persuade a sick person to accept of health, a labouring and laden person to accept of rest? And yet see the hardness of our hearts, and what strange unnatural things sin hath made us; that we can hardly find in our hearts to hearken unto any thing that will do us good, so that we seem even bereft of that common principle of *self-preservation*. After we have heard all this again and again, though our mercifull *Jesus* in tenderest compassion to our dying Souls, doth never cease, but by his Servants sent forth to this purpose, daily

daily reneweth this invitation to us, yet the greatest number by far, even of those who make a profession of following him, are still but where they were, or rather farther from him, and their own rest in him, than at first: laden still as much or more than ever, and what's worst and saddest of all, seem not able to indure so much as to hear of ease. This load of sin hath pressed most of us down into a flat stupidity, and we have born it so long that we feel it not, it hath made us all over brawny and void of fence, our hearts are even turn'd to stone and capable of no impression. How many amongst us from day to day, as so many wretched Pack-horses driven by the Devil and his Servants, go trotting on in the wide road to hell, as contentedly and with as much satisfaction, as if it were the only good service we could do our selves; and so long as he allures us on with a bell and a feather, and we can have but a litt'l straw and provender at night, we forget both the load that we carry and the sad end of our Journey, and seem as proud of this slavery, as if it were the very height of honour and

and dignity our natures are capable of. Our very bonds and fetters, be they never so hard and heavy, we are too apt to account our richest ornaments, greatest bravery, and the noblest badges of honour ; the very husks and swines meat wherewith we are fed, the most princely fare and royal dainties ; yea and those filthy and stinking paddles and mire we are driven through, far more sweet and pleasant than the Garden of *Eden* ; and, in a word, our most abject slavery the most perfect freedom. It were well, if many of those that profess *Christianity* in word, and some other little thin formalities of duty, did not yet in their hearts account their most mercifull *Jesus* the cruellest tyrant that ever appeared to torment the world, esteeming his easie yoke the most galling, and his light burden the most heavy and grievous that ever were born ; his commandments the greatest grievances, and his Gospel which hath brought *life and immortality to light*, the very worst tidings that ever were brought unto men ; and all this, because hereby War is proclaimed against their beloved Murtherers,

therers, their darling lusts. Why else should men be so angry to be told of the load they carry; account them their enemies that perswade them to lay it down; neglect so great salvation, even when they hear there is no escaping for them that do so? Why do they tread under foot the Son of God in their whole course of walking, and set no more by the bloud of the Covenant, than as if it were some unholy or common thing? Why should they do such daily despight unto the Spirit of God, and turn his grace into wantonness, and despise the goodness and long suffering of God which should lead them to repentance? Are they not sufficiently told that they add hereby daily to their heavy load, and *lay up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* Rom. 2. 5. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19. 10. And they industriously keep out of the way, chusing to be any-where rather than near his House, or where he is in the midst of two or three gathered together in his name. As if no loss could ever befall them

them like unto that of being saved from their sins, it seems to be their greatest study and laborious contrivance, how they may lose themselves daily more and more in sin ; and even run into a Wilderness of sins, to render their finding and saving almost impossible. He offereth them freely Milk to nourish them, Wine to chear them, himself the living bread that came down from Heaven to strengthen them. *John. 6. His Spirit to be in them a well of living water springing up unto eternal life.* *John*

*4 14. They are deaf to all this, they will spend their money for that which is not bread, and their strength for that which satisfieth not. They are resolved to labour for the wind, and will go hew out for themselves Cisterns, even broken Cisterns that can hold no water. O, if we have any sense left in us of either happiness or misery, if the devil and sin have not so quite unmanned us, that we are not able to distinguish between light and darkness, sweet and bitter, good and evil, life and death, heaven and hell, salvation and damnation, God and the Devil, let us yet attend to this voice of mercy,*

these breathings of love in the Text.  
 1. Be persuaded. 2. Be directed by this invitation how to do good to your Souls.

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## C H A P. L

## S E C T. I.

LET us be *persuaded*, as many of us as are weary and heavy laden to come unto *Christ*. Are we not also? Heavy laden, I am sure, we are; how weary, I know not. What would we have more to encourage us that here we have not? Can we desire more than rest? Can we have it cheaper than by gift? Can we have better assurance than *Christ's* promise? Can it be worth any thing, if not worth coming for? Can we expect more than a free invitation? Salvation is prepared and made ready for us all, we are all of us most freely invited to it, invited by the great *King* of Heaven and Earth, not

not so much as one of us, how vile so ever we are or have been, excepted, and will we not be thankfull for all this, and *come*? O abominable ingratitude! or rather senslessness, and truly lamentable above all things! What? so many heavy laden persons amongst us, laden with sinfulness from the very Womb, heavier laden by the numerous sins which we have been daily adding ever since we could do any thing, and many ways laden for sin with very grievous evils heavy to be born, and such as there is not one amongst us all, but would gladly be eased of at any rate but that one of parting with those sins which brought them all upon us: That we should hear this invitation again and again preached unto us, and it should continually lye open in our Bibles before our eyes, and Christ should wait with much patience from day to day; and yet that we should neither have ears to hear, nor eyes to see, nor hearts to embrace it: that we should either not have heard it, or ever have heard it as a matter of no concernment at all, or of small concernment unto us: or that we should

be so backward and unwilling to accept of it, as if we were invited to some *Parisian Marriage* to be sealed in our bloud, or suspected it to be some snare laid onely to intrap us: this would be a wonder even above all wonders, had not sin so visibly prevailed over men, that it hath left no room for wonder at any thing that is wicked, and hath made it the onely wonder that *God* should yet continue to offer us mercy. How can it be, that instead of coming, men should be always going some other way, hunting about and beating every bush for shifts and vain excuses whereby they may shuffle it of any way, and keep themselves miserable for ever? Would it not seem a very unreasonable thing and even incredible, that a man hungry and thirsty, ready to dye for want of a bit of bread or cup of water, should yet refuse a kind invitation to a plentifull Table? Or that one who hath not, in a very col'd Winter, so much as one poor rag to cover his nakedness, and keep his body from freezing, should yet refuse a good warm suit of apparel when charitably offered him? How absurd

soever this may seem to us, and though we can hardly imagine that any one, except a very madman, could possibly in such a case be guilty of so great self-neglect, yet far more absurd are too many amongst us, who take themselves to be no fools, but nevertheless mad indeed for that: such I mean, who are ready to perish everlasting in their sins, and yet will not hearken to the voice of a loving *Saviour* inviting them freely to everlasting life and glory. As it was once said. *Christ came unto his own, and his own received him not.* John i. 11. So it may be seen among us now, how he daily cometh in his word and *Ministers* unto us all, wooing and beseeching laden sinners to come unto him, and how many of us will not hear? How many of us laugh at his message? How many scorn and deride, and many other ways abuse his *Servants*? May not God still say, as it is said, Isa. 65. 2. *I have spread my bands all the day unto a rebellious people?* May not *Christ* yet weep and mourn over us, as once he did over *Jerusalem*, crying out, *How often would I have gathered you, even as a Hen gathereth*

her Chickens under her Wings, and ye  
 would not ! Matt. 23. 37. Hath he not  
 great reason to say unto us—*Ye will not  
 come unto me that ye might have life.*  
 John 5. 40. O ! why should we any  
 longer, with the deaf Adder, stop our  
 ears against this charming voice of *love*  
 it self ? Why should we so madly arm  
 and fortifie our selves before-hand a-  
 gainst all the gracious attempts of a  
 loving *Saviour* to win us, against all  
 the sweet motions of the *Holy Spirit* of  
 grace to sanctifie us, by fixing in our  
 hearts a strong resolution to do wick-  
 ed y ; as if we were afraid of nothing  
 more than to lose the wretched power  
 and liberty of destroying our selves ?  
 Why should we thus stand upon our  
 guard against God and Goodness ? Why  
 is it, that we are so resolute in holding  
 out even to the last against all the solici-  
 tations of mercy, against all the beseech-  
 ings of God by his Ministers, against  
 all their praying and intreating us in  
 Christ's name to be *reconciled unto God*,  
 to be at peace with him, to accept of  
 grace and pardon, even as stiffly as if  
 we were defending some strong hold  
 and fortress against the *Turk* or *boldiest*  
 of

of *tyrants*? We will not be brought by any condescensions of our offended God to yield unto him upon any the fairest terms of agreement; to any thoughts of surrendering our hearts unto him, so long as we can make any shift to keep the *flesh* alive, and make any provision to feed the lusts thereof. *God bath made a great Supper and bidden many.* Matt. 22. But how few of us will come to it? He inviteth us all most freely and lovingly, and requireth nothing more of us but to come, he sends again and again, being unwilling we should lose his bounty, to bid us *come*. And yet how few of us will stir from home for all this? *all things are ready*, but many of us *set light by* all this heavenly provision. *His Oxen and Fatlings are killed*, but many of us value them not at all, but with a kind of huffing scorn and disdain turn away from him, as if they should say, *tush, what care we for all this?* We have something else of greater concerns to us to trouble our heads about. Let those who have no Farms to husband, no Cattel to feed, no Markets to follow, no Wives and Families to care

for, mind such things as these: *that is to say,* would men speak out what they think, and use their tongues to the language their hearts are but acquainted with, as some have impudence enough to do, they have more satisfaction in drudging for this world, than labouring for a better; more desire of the honour they receive one of another, than of that which is of God only; of the perishing wealth on earth than the true riches in heaven: they taste more sweetness in the pleasures of the flesh, and in the food of their lusts than in the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore, or the meat which indureth unto everlasting life. O when will we be ashamed of being so foolish for our selves? How long shall *Satan* and our lusts within us be allowed thus to stand contending against God and his *Holy Spirit*, yea and our own reason too, for the mastery, or rather have it yielded up without contending? Whilst God draweth but one way with the gentle cords of love, shall these be always prevalent against him, pulling many ways with the cart-ropes of iniquity and vanity? Whilst our blessed

*Jesus*

Jesus is daily calling and inviting us unto blessedness, shall these be allowed to stop our ears with the dirt of this world? whilst he presenteth us with the most delightfull prospect of heaven and eternal glory, shall we still patiently suffer them to dazzle or blind our eyes with the pomps and vanities of a wicked world? Divine love and pity never ceaseth calling out unto us, and saying, Save your selves from this untoward generation. Act. 2. 40. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. 2 Pet. 1. 10. Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling. Phil. 2. 12. Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. Act. 3. 19. And what answer give we unto all this? May not Christ yet use those words of us, as truely as ever he did of any other. The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed, least they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Act. 28. 27. O sad thought! That the God of this world should have so blinded

blinded the minds of them that believe not, least the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine strive upon them. 2 Cor. 4. 4. So little do all the gracious methods of love and peace prevail with most of us, we still love darkness better than light, because our deeds are evil.

§. II. But let us now at least consider, if we can consider any thing, but how to mischieve our selves ; let us consider what we will do in the end of all these things. Shall any of us be able to dwell with *everlasting burnings* ? And will we not be at the easie pains to come unto Christ to prevent them? If we will not, either we must think we are well & rough able to indure that *unquenchable fire*, or else we have hope to escape it some other way than by *coming to Christ* : or *lastly*, we perswade our selves fondly that there is no such thing to fear. If we can be so vain as to think the torments of *hell* tollerable, 'tis onely because we understand not what God hath told us of them. Our God is a *consuming fire*, Heb. 12. 29. It is therefore a terrible thing to fall into the bands of the

the living God, Heb. 10. 31. When he shall deliver us to the tormenter to execute his wrath and vengeance upon us to the uttermost in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone world without end. If we can hope any other way than by Christ to escape, we have not minded, or do not believe what hath been already said to the contrary. And if we think that there is no *hell* for sinners, then must we think there is no God to be honored or believed, for it is He himself hath told us, that there is. And if there be no God, then are we no men, for without God there can be nothing. But it is not now our business to convince *Atheists*, but with the Apostle, knowing the terror of the Lord to perswade men, 2 Cor 5. 11. As sure as there is a God in heaven, there is an unquenchable fire in Hell, prepared for the *devil* and his *angels*, and sure to be the portion of all sinners that side with them, and will not come and submit themselves unto him who came to destroy the works of the *devil*. What will men say when they see and feel it, and have not the least hope left them ever to find any deliverance from it or abate-

abatement of it? How will they curse the day that they neglected the invitation of a *Saviour*, and the many timely warnings which they have had to accept of it? Why are we now at rest? Why stir we not yet towards *Christ*? Do we feed our selves up with vain hopes that we may come time enough hereafter? What assurance have we of hereafter? Are our lives granted us for a certain number

*Jam. 4. 14.* of years, or days, or hours?

Do any of us know what will be on the morrow? Are we any surer than he was of whom we reade, *Luke 12. 20.* That our souls shall not this night be required of us? Say then, where would all our foolish hopes and confidence be? If we be resolved to hearken to the voice of *Christ* inviting us to himself, why not now? Is it too soon to be at rest? Why do we yet harden our hearts? Why not now, whilst it is called to day, whilst it is the day of Salvation? Now we are invited, and we may come, but we know not whether to morrow, we shall have either ears to hear, or legs to come. Now rest is offered, but how soon may

the

the time come when God *Heb. 4. 3.*

will swear we shall not

enter into his rest? When Christ shall peremptorily conclude that none of those that were bidden shall taste

of his Supper; there will *Luk. 14. 24.*

be a time when the door

shall be shut, and men shall call in vain,

*Lord, Lord, open unto us:*

but it will not be opened. *Matt. 25. 11.*

Let us then, as we love our

Souls, and desire their everlasting rest,

take into our most serious thoughts what

we reade in the sacred Book of God to

this purpose.

In the 1st. Chap. of the *Proverbs*, v. 10. we find, that *Wisdom*. (even the eternal *Wisdom* of the *Father*, become incarnate in our *Lord Jesus Christ*) uttered her voice in the streets. *How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and scorners delight in scorning, and fools hate knowledge?* Unto you, O Men, I call, and my voice is to the Sons of Man. O ye simple, understand *Wisdom*, and ye fools be of an understanding heart, *Prov. 8. 4,*

5. Turn you at my reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Comfortable words

words indeed, even such as we read, Isa. 55. 1. *Ha ! Every one that thirsteth come to the waters, and he that bath no money ; come ye, buy and eat ; yea come, buy Wine and Milk, without money and without price. Wherfore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? Harken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your Soul delight it self in fatness. Incline your ear and come ye, bear and your Souls shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.* And, v. 6. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Now if after all this, men are yet resolved to sit still, and not be moved at all to consider, either how miserable they are, or how happy they may be ; if they will by their unworthy behaviour give *Wisdom* cause to complain, as she doth, Prov. 1. 24. *I have called, and ye refused ; I have stretched my hand, and no man regarded ; but ye have*

have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: Let them mind, as they regard their future welfare, what there followeth, and what they shall certainly reap in the end, as the sad fruit, but just reward of their stubbornness, v. 26. *I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh, when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirl-wind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you.* Men think, it may be, that such things will never come; but how secure soever now they be, and how little soever they break their sleep with such thoughts of misery before it come; be sure they may, as sure as they are sinners, that once it shall come. Let them now cry *peace, peace*, as much as they will, to themselves, yet *There is no peace, saith God, to the wicked*, Isa. 48. 22. Though they now mightily please and hug themselves in the abundance of their riches, and health, and honour, and carnal delights, and say to their Souls, *Soul take thine ease, eat, drink and merry*: Yet shall they one day be awakened, and their now drowsie consciences startled and affrighted, and they, at their wits end, shall

shall not know which way to turn themselves. Judgment will be terrible, and they will not dare to abide it ; mercy hath been so long despised, that they will not dare to hope for it. What will they then do ? What an Hell shall they then find within them ? Hear *Wisdom* again, *Prov. i. 28.* *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord. Therefore they shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and shall be filled with their own devices.* By this time we must needs be sensible, what it lieth us upon, to hearken unto the invitation of *Christ*, and to make all the hast we can to come unto him.

§. III. And yet, it may well be feared, there is one great rub in the way to very many amongst us, who are convinced of the necessity of coming to *Christ*. This stands like the *deaf-crag* or *rock* they talk of in *Scotland*, betwixt sinners and all the exhortations and persuasions we can use to bring them to *Christ*, and it is an hasty and groundless confidence, that they are come to him alrea-  
dy.

ly ; whence all we say to persuade them seemeth of no concernment to them at all. To believe in *Christ*, and enter into *Covenant* with him in *Baptism* is to *come* unto him ; and this, say they, we have already done. We are sure that we are *Baptized*, and we are sure we do *believe* in *Christ* ; and therefore what needs all this adoe to perswade us to *come to Christ*.

Let all such as have so great a conceit of themselves, and so strong a confidence that they are *come to Christ*, bethink themselves how they took up this opinion of themselves, how it is grounded, and how they can satisfie themselves of the truth of it. *Baptism without the answer of a good conscience towards God will not save them*, 1 Pet. 3. 21. A profession of Faith, nay the strongest Faith they can have, if it be not that *Faith which worketh by love*, Gal. 5. 6. will do them no good. If it be not this, let it be a strong Faith, it is a strong delusion, and the believing of a lie. And then, the more confident *believer* the worse *Christian* ; the stronger the *Faith*, the more desperate the condition ; the fewer doubtings, the less safety ; and nearer

ter Christ in opinion, the farther from him in reality. Now they of whom we now speak, what *Faith* foever they profess to have, do little else but shew to the world their vanity in this foolish confidence. They are wholly strangers to true *repentance*, for they have not cast off their sins: They never entered upon new *obedience*, for they willfully break God's Commandments dayly, and hate nothing more, than to be told of it. They resist not, but rather seek *temptations* unto sin, and so are ordinarily and easily overcome by them. They bear not with patience God's chastisements for their sins. They are not *contented* with that condition which God's wise-dom hath allotted them. They are not willing to part with all things, nor with any thing, so much as a lust, for Christ and to follow him: But they keep their old sins and love them as much as ever; practice not the duties of Christians, but count them as great a weariness as ever; they mortifie not the deeds of the body, but seek out all ways and inventions to please and pamper it, and make as great provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof as ever: and yet they would have

have it thought, that they are already come to Christ, and are good Christians. Let such persons truly answer this one question, and thereby they will at once confute all their confident pretences to Faith in Christ. Do they believe the Gospel of Christ to be true, or do they not? If they shall now say they do not believe it to be true, then they shall confess that they have no *Faith in Christ*, because they believe not his words. If they say they believe it to be true, then they do believe what it telleth them, and by what it telleth them must needs be convinced that they have no *saving Faith*. This, I say, it telleth them, that men of such lives as they live shall not be saved; it saith plainly enough that they who do not *repent* and forsake their sins, they that are not *converted* and made as little Children, are not born again and made *new creatures*, deny not *themselves*, and are not very willing to leave all for Christ's sake; that take not up his Cross and follow him; that deny not *ungodliness and worldly lusts*, obey not the Gospel, but live in *fornication, uncleanness, drunkenness, revelings*, and such like, shall not inhe-

rit the Kingdom of God. Therefore whatsoever men pretend, so long as they continue such as they are, and do as they do, they have no *saving Faith*, nor indeed any thing of sound reason, being so absurd as to profess that they believe and hope to be saved by believing that, which if they believe, they must needs believe that there is no salvation for such as they.

§. IV. Let us not therefore any longer deceive our selves by pretending to what we have not, but rather awake and rise from our soft and pleasing beds of security, and come to *Christ* for what we want. To move us hereunto, let us consider. 1. *Our selves.* 2. *Our Saviour.* 3. *The promise.* If these will not move us, nothing will.

1. Let us consider *our selves* who are invited unto *Christ*, and in our selves, these three things are seriously to be thought upon. 1. *Our condition.* 2. *Our danger.* 3. *Our unworthiness.*

1. If we consider well our *condition*, as we are before we come to *Christ*, we must needs see it to be such, as no man in his right wits can be proud of, or indeed contented with, it being really as bad as bad can be. Are not all men weary of a

very

very mean and contemptible condition, of a most troublesome and miserable condition? And hath it not been made abundantly manifest to us, that ours is altogether such, before we be truly come to *Christ*? The condition of a drudge, of a slave, of a beggar, can neither be pleasant nor honorable, and such is our condition, in the very vilest sort, till we be come to *Jesus Christ*, and are entered into his service, the onely state of prefect freedom and true honour. Shall not we then, whose labours are so great, base and wearisome; whose disappointments are so many, and sorrows so bitter, so many in number, so heavy in weight; shall not we, who are enslaved in the vilest slavery to our own corrupt lusts, captivated to the cruellest of Tyrants the Prince of darkness, stripped quite naked of all things that may either beautifie or defend us, keep us from being either a shame or a torment to our selves; we who have lost all that ever we had, forfeited all that ever was promised, blocked up the way to happiness so strongly against our selves, that it is not in the power of all the world to lay it open again to us; *We*, who are daily languishing, decaying, dying, have nothing in our selves, can find nothing in any

any other creature, which may revive, refresh, comfort or support us ; lastly, shall not *we*, who have as few friends as comforts, as many enemies as wants and infirmities ; who have made our selves odious to *God* whose love alone can bless us ; obnoxious to the *Devil* whose design is to destroy us, laden our selves with so much filth, that we go groaning under it all the day long, and are sinking hourly into the pit of destruction ; shall not *we* hearken with joy to this so seasonable an invitation ?

2. If we consider the *danger* we are dayly in, it will be sure enough to make our hearts beat, and all our joints to tremble. What *danger* can be like that of an impenitent sinner, who carries his most inveterate *enemy* about with him wheresoever he goeth, lieth down to sleep with him every night, loveth him and trusteth in him above all others, and counteth him his onely true friend, and worst of all, is not sensible of the secret and mortal wounds he continually giveth him. This *enemy* is the sinner *himself*, that hates himself, fights against himself, treacherously deceiveth himself, and will not be persuaded to believe it. He day-

ly exposeth himself to the greatest evils, dayly thrusteth himself forward, and draweth nearer and nearer to these evils, and is without any help or remedy, any possible way of escaping but this one so freely tendered unto him. To lose our blessed God, and all that's truly good at once with him ; to be shut out from his presence, and all happiness therewith for evermore ; to go into everlasting torments, with no better company than the Devil and his *Angels* ; to lie with these foul fiends in flames as unquenchable as intolerable without any hope of deliverance ; to be already under the sentence of condemnation, and in continual fears and expectation of the severest execution ; to have no way open unto life but one, no friend in the world that can guide us into it, or carry us through it, but one-ly he that made it. When *Jesus Christ*, who, with the expence of his own most pretious *bloud*, hath bought our pardon ; bringeth it to us with his own hand, and beggetteth us to take pity on our selves, and be as willing to accept it, as he to give it : When we are already in the hands of our enemy, surrounded and assaulted on all sides with his bloody instruments

struments, and no way to flee but one ; no rescue or deliverance by any other but by *Jesus* alone ; shall we yet stand, in the midst of all this danger, disputing with our selves, whether we had best come to him and live, or stay where we are and die ? The longer we stay where we are, the weaker we grow ; every wound lets out much of our bloud and strength ; the more we delay, the nearer we approach to ruine, the more difficulties we are dayly intangled withall, the harder we find it to come off with life ; and why then should we yet drive off our coming to Christ ?

3. Consider we lastly in our selves our great *unworthiness* of so inestimable a kindness ; and if the hainousness of the crime, or the baseness of the malefactor can serve to magnifie and commend the mercy of the *Judge* or *Prince*, certainly the love of *Christ* will appear marvellous unto us, and worthy of all acceptance. Let us but think, what we are, and what we have done ; what God made us, and what we have made our selves ; what God is to us, and how we have behaved our selves to him. How greatly we have dishonour'd him, and how high-  
ly

ly we have from day to day provoked him, what we have deserved at his hand, and how patient he is toward us, what love he offereth us ; and we must needs account it a miracle of goodness and mercy, that there should be yet any room for us in God's favour. What ? *We* who are the Children of Traitors and Rebels, the issue of uncleanness, and as it were, the vermine now springing of putrefaction and rottenness, born both enemies and bankrupts ; *we* that have been rebellious and treacherous Children from the Womb, and have heaped up iniquity and multitudes of most abominable sins to our original corruption ; *we* that have so much and so long abused all our parts and gifts, all God's bounty and blessings, all his grace and patience, all our time and opportunities, to his dishonour and our own shame and reproach ; *we* that have slighted so many calls, stopped our ears against so many earnest invitations and intreaties, and vilified and set at nought so many gracious promises and encouragements ; *we* that have so long taken part with God's enemies, held out against his *Holy Spirit* almost as long as we have any breath left us, and set our

lusts in battel array against God, even  
 bidding defiance to grace and salvation.  
 That after all this we should yet have  
 any hope given us of a reconciliation, a-  
 nother day granted us to consider of our  
 peace; that we should not onely live,  
 but have such an invitation renewed un-  
 to us. O let us not now any longer so  
 forget both our God and our selves, as to  
 add this highest contempt to all the rest  
 of those gross indignities which we have  
 already done to the *Lord of Glory*; as  
 now, I say, after we know and under-  
 stand, and have been once again put in  
 mind of all this, to reject this invitation  
 of our blessed *Jesus*. Let us not grow up  
 to that height of madness and folly, to  
 resolve in very spite, to love and mercy,  
 to perish everlastingily. How great a bra-  
 very soever this piece of self-destroying  
 courage may seem unto some men now,  
 yet will it certainly quail in the end.  
 However the evil one possess them now  
 and fill them with ravings and madness,  
 perswading them to account profaneness  
 wit, and impudent wickedness the high-  
 est gallantry, and one of the finest qua-  
 lities of a Gentleman to laugh at sober  
 and serious Religion, as the weakness of  
 fools,

fools, or the dotings of Melancholicks, that are apt to fear shadows, and to be deluded by their own phansies ; yet will they find this their *laughter* to be *madness* indeed, when it shall turn into *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.* Let us therefore well consider our selves, in the first place, and be so wise as to come unto *Christ.*

¶ V. 2. Secondly, let us set our thoughts a while on our *Blessed Jesus*, the good and gracious *God* that here calleth and inviteth us to himself. If we can refuse an invitation unto *him* given us by *himself*, it must needs be, because we know him not, who he is, what great things he hath done for us, what better things he hath suffered for us, what glorious things he hath both given us, and laid up in store for us. It can sure be nothing but ignorance of *him*, that can make any of us so disobedient to him, or so unthankfull for him. *Lord, whither should we go?* said St. Peter, *thou hast the words of eternal life.* Joh. 6. 68. Did we know this or stedfastly believe it, could all the world perswade us to keep away from *him*? *He that followeth*

him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life, Joh. 8. 12. Can we believe this, and not follow him though it were unto his cross and grave? In a word, he is our *Jesus*, our *Saviour*, and can we believe him to be so, and our selves to be lost sinners, and not come unto him? Well, *all that are given unto him of the Father will come unto him*, Joh. 6. 37. If

Joh. 6. 45.

65.

we come not, we thereby shew plainly what we are, such as the *Father disowneth*, such as *We will not vouchsafe his fatherly blessing unto*. Consider,

1. *Who is Christ*. Is he not the *Almighty God, God over all blessed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. and shall not he command us? Must we expect an intreaty from the great and onely *Potentate*, the *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*, the *Sovereign Majesty of Heaven and Earth*? Did not a *word of his mouth* make us out of nothing, and cannot the least breath of *his mouth* blow us into dust? Could not be more easily have destroyed us than redeemed us? Needed he have died to damn us, as he did to save us? Might he not as justly load us, as ease us; torment us as refresh us?

us? And shall we think it becometh us to stand parlying with Omnipotence? Dare we stand still like stocks when the great *God* calleth us, not move when he commandeth us, *He*, I say, *in whom we live and move and have our being*, Act. 17. 28. What a bold and daring impiety, what a mad fool hardiness is this?

2. Think again, *whither* hath not this great *God* condescended to *come* for us, that we undone Souls might have this blessed priviledge of coming unto *him*? Hath he not himself vouchsafed to come the far greatest part of the way to meet us, nay to follow us, to seek us that he might save us? *He* the *Lord of Glory*, the eternal Authour of life and being, to find out us vile worms of the earth, to overtake us in our sins, and even upon the brink of destruction, to rescue us as a prey ready to be swallowed up, even out of the jaws of the *devouring Lion*: to follow us with the bowels of pity and tenderest compassion, when we were hastening as fast as our own lusts could hurry us, or *Satan* draw us, from *God* and Heaven, to Death and Hell. Came he not from the highest throne of Heavenly Glory and *Majesty*, to the lowest de-

degree of earthly *humility* and *abasement*, that he might exalt us from slavery to blessedness? Did he not vouchsafe to veil for a time his glorious deity in our frail humility, and because the Children were partakers of flesh and bloud, himself take part of the same, Heb. 2. 14. to be made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, Heb. 2 17. to humble himself so low for us, as to be in the form of a Servant, of no reputation, obedient to death even the death of the Cross? Phil. 2. 7, 8. He who knew no sin was he not content to be made sin for us, 2 Cor. 5. 21. to be made a curse for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? 1 Cor. 5.

22. And shall we grudge Gal. 3. 13. after all this, to leave our sins, our lusts, our enemies, our death and destruction, to come unto him in the way of life for Salvation?

3. Remember, how he hath brought with him his *Father* our offended *God*, from whom we had wretchedly departed; against whom we had wickedly rebelled, to be reconciled unto us, to offer us pardon and peace; to be again as his *Father*, so our *Father*; as his *God*, so our *God*. Hath he

Joh. 20. 17.

he not brought with him the *Holy Spirit*, whom we have so long grieved and resisted, to be our instructor and guide to life, our sanctifier and new principle of life, our comforter and supporter in the way to life ? *Tis he that hath brought life and immortality to light through his Gospel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. It is *he* that hath set up his glorious Gospel a bright shining light to shew us the path of life. It is *he* that hath brought Heaven it self, as it were, to our doors, and set the gates thereof wide open for us freely to enter and be happy. It is his desire to be always with us, in our Bed-chambers, in our Closets, in our very hearts, to dwell with us and in us, to make us his *Temples*, the living Temples of the living God ; to make even every thing Heaven to us, and a Heaven to our selves, whilst we have the gracious and glorious God always with us. And will we not come to our selves again to meet with him ?

4. Is not this same mercifull *Jesus* who calleth us thus lovingly to himself, *the way, the truth and the life* ? Joh. 14. 6. Is he not able to entertain us, to bless and crown us with eternal joys ? Is he not willing and ready to embrace all his

poor returning prodigals, to feast them, to kiss them with the kisses of his love, to settle them in his *Father's* house for ever? Hath he not sufficiently demonstrated by his bloudy death his good will toward us, and by his glorious Resurrection, his infinite power to bless us?

5. Lastly, it is *he*, that by his own example hath marked out the way before us, and removed out of the way all the rubs and stumbling-blocks that might hinder us, and conquered all our enemies that lay in Ambush to destroy us. He hath bid us *be of good cheer*, because *he hath overcome the world*, Joh. 16. 33. because *he came to destroy him that had the power of death*, the Devil, Heb. 2. 14. because *he will shortly tread*

Rom. 16. *down all enemies under our feet*; and death it self shall 20. *be swallow'd up in victory*,

1 Cor. 15. 54. And hath assured us, we shall be *more than Conquerours through him that loved us*, Rom. 8. 37. Will not now all this love and mercy, all this condescension and humility, all this pains and preparation, all this largeness and boun-ty; will not his coming down to earth and going up to Heaven for us, his do-  
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ing good and suffering evil for us, his emptying himself and dignifying our nature for us, his pacifying *God* and conquering the *Devil* for us, his humble life and bitter death for us ; will nothing of all this move us to be our own friends, to endeavour our own welfare, to hate vanity and death, to love life and glory ? Then are we stones rather than men.

§. VI. 3. Let us, *lastly*, fix our eyes upon the *promise* which he hath made us, and see if that be not enough to win us. I, saith he, *will give you rest*. *Rest* he promiseth, it shall be freely *given*, and it shall be given by *Christ himself*.

I. It is *rest* which *Christ* here promiseth, and what is that less than all things which we indeed want or can desire ? Would we not all be happy ? What is it but this desire of being happy that robbeth us of all rest here upon the earth ? Our heads have no rest for contriving it, our hearts have no rest for longing after it, our bodies have no rest for labouring for it, our friends have no rest for our soliciting their help and advice about it, our enemies have no rest for our endeav-

vours to remove them out of our way to it, the world hath no rest through our restlessness to attain unto it. We feel our wants dayly of one kind or other, and this is very uneasie to us, we cannot rest till we have them supplied : We feel our grievances dayly, and this is yet more uneasie to us, and we cannot rest till we have them redressed : We find our ignorance to be great, and our weakness to be greater. We want, and would have ; and we know not what ; we imagine something that may do us good, and we drive hard after it, and we cannot overtake it ; we find something that we sought, and we are glad of it, and it proves a very shadow, and that is not in it which we expected. Thus we give no *rest* to our selves by seeking out for something that we may *rest* in, and yet when the onely true and sure *rest* is offered us, we will not accept it. We hear our blessed *Jesus* inviting us to all that we would have, a comfortable and everlasting repose and resting-place for our troubled Souls, such as in the midst of all wants and vexations, in the very heat of troubles and persecutions, though we should be upon the rack or in the *flame*,

flame, will never fail us ; but we may sleep and rest secure in the arms of a *Saviour* ; a peaceable state of Soul, a sweet calm and tranquility of mind and conscience ; of *conscience*, I say, which so often like the troubled Sea will not be quiet, but restlessly worketh in it self, and casteth forth foam and dirt, damping and stifling all our joys and comforts ; which when all things else are quiet round about us and create us no kind of troubles, is yet an enemy in our breasts, giving us many secret blows, setting fire on the house within, frightening out all delights, and consuming all our hopes. O what a calm and pleasant serenity, what a reviving in our selves and light-someness of heart might we have would we come to *Christ* ? Yea, and when all these working days on earth shall have an end, with how great satisfaction might we leave these mortal bodies to sleep in dust, bidding them adieu till a happy meeting in Heaven, having a comfortable assurance of the pardon of our sins, and a well grounded hope of a joyfull Resurrection to eternal life ? How cheerfully would these Souls of ours welcome their liberty, and fly forth into the

the embraces of their *Bridegroom* and *Redeemer*? How joyfully would they salute those bright *Angels* that come at his command to convey them into *Abraham's* bosome, to rest in perfect peace in the presence of *God* for ever and ever? *O blessed rest*, a *rest* as strange as desirable, a *rest* upon *Thrones*, with a *Crown* and a *Kingdom*, such as never was, nor ever shall be upon earth. And is not all this enough to invite us unto *Christ*?

2. All this he will *freely give* us. Did he call upon us to buy it, we might for ever despair of it, because we have nothing to pay for it; nothing we could bid for it, but we must undervalue it, and the more undeserve it. Did he expect we should do some notable service to merit it, we could never hope for it. But here is all the comfort in the world; as we are beggars and have nothing, so he inviteth to come, and take for nothing: to come and buy, but without money and without price. Then indeed we *buy* it, when we give our selves to *Christ* for it, and value it above all price that man can pay. Thus let us prize it, and thus let us give our selves to *Christ* to receive it, and be sure he will give it.

3. He will give it, even he whose it is, who hath purchased it at the dearest rate, that it could be bought at, *not with corruptible things, with Silver or Gold but with his own most precious blood*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. Hence should we learn how to value it, and hence should we learn how to thank him for such a gift. It may be ours for coming, but he hath it not for us at so cheap a rate: *He became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, he hath born our griefs and carried our sorrows, he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, by his stripes we are healed.* The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, Isa. 53. Our sins robbed him of all rest, that he might give us rest. He wore a *Crown of Thorns*, that he might give us a *Crown of Glory*; he was mocked and suffered *shame* that he might bring us to *honour*; he was led like a *Lamb* to the slaughter, that he might place us among his *sheep* at his right hand in his Kingdom. And is his free invitation to all this dear bought mercy to be slighted by us? If this three-fold consideration of *our selves, our Saviour, and our hopes* will not prevail with

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us to *come unto Christ*, to be his constant Disciples and obedient Subjects, I must needs say, I do not know any thing can be said by man likely to move us. This therefore shall suffice to have been said by way of *perswasion*.

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## C H A P. II.

### S E C T. I.

WE come now to the *second* thing intended, *viz. Direction*. It is to be hoped that there are amongst us, at least, some few, and I wish they be more than a few, who having heard all this, are not willing to be eternally miserable: but will be content rather to take some pains, whilst there is hope, to *come unto Christ*, than to be for ever without that blessed *rest* which he so freely promiseth to give us. Some few may possibly begin to be pricked at the heart, and ready to ask, *Sirs, what shall we do to be saved?* How shall we behave our selves?

selves? What course shall we take to come so unto *Christ*, as to be sure of rest to our Souls? If any such there be, they are prepared to receive directions, and for their satisfaction something is to be said more.

We have already heard, to our great comfort and encouragement, if we will but mind it, that amongst all those numerous Souls that are laden with Sin, there is not one excluded or debarred by *Christ* from the liberty of *coming* to him. This is a great encouragement to all poor sinners, that there is a way to come, and they are all invited. *Suffer these little ones*, saith *Christ*, *to come unto me, and forbid them not*, Mark 10. Let us labour to be but *little* enough in our own esteem, and then the poorer and meaner, the baser and viler we are in our own eyes, or in the eye of the world, the welcomer guests are we like to be to *Christ*. Not the righteous and proud *Pharisee*, that counts no man *Godly* but himself, and some few that are of his *opinion* and *sect*, and on that account standeth at a distance from the mixed multitude for fear of pollution, though the sour leaven was more likely to

to sowlren the mass of dough, than the dough to infect it ; but the *sinfull, yet bumble Publican*, whose humility set him in his own opinion at a distance, not from other men, but from God, so that he durst hardly lift up his eyes to Heaven, much less cast a scornfull eye upon his brethren, is like to be honored with *Christ's acceptance*. Let our sighs, our groans and our tears be heard and seen by him, though they be not made visible to men ; let him see us *poor in spirit*, and of a *broken and contrite heart*, *hungring and thirsting after his righteousness*, not filled and even glutted, as some seem to be, with a conceit of their own ; it maketh no matter of what degree or quality, age or sex, honest calling or profession we are of, *there is no respect of persons with God*. Too many proud and haughty Spirits, too many drudging and worldly Souls, too many nice and voluptuous creatures, will not be at the pains to come. But as it is not the greatness of our secular imployments, or the multitude of our private businesses ; as it is not the greatness of our persons, or the nobility of our parentage, the delicacy of our bres-  
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ding, or the largeness of our patrimony, the tenderness of our Sex, the feebleness of old Age, or the greenness of youth, the confidence of our healthfull constitution, or hopes of long life, the opinion of our great parts, much knowledge, or Godly tenets, or any other quality or condition can make us a dispensation for not coming ; that is, can secure us of the Rest promised by *Christ*, though we do not the duty of *Christians*. So neither is there any thing that should affright us whilst we do the duty of *Christians* from hoping for rest by *Christ*. All may come without exception, that's our great priviledge ; and all ought to come without exception, that's our bounden duty. All that are weary *may come*, all that will have rest *must* come. Yet as ever we hope to speed by coming, let us be carefull that we come aright. Let us have ever before our eyes, as a warning to us, the sad example of *Christ's* indignation towards the negligent and careless comer. He that, being invited, was so impudent as to come without his *wedding garment*, found to his sorrow a welcome answerable to his bold impiety. A sad kind

of rest he found it to be bound hand and foot and cast into utter darkness, Matt. 22. 13. This is read in a Parable, and it warneth us to draw near unto Christ with reverence and Godly fear, as unto the most glorious God, aswell as unto the mercifull Saviour of sinners. Come we must so, as firmly purposing to continue with him for ever, for if ever we depart from him again, we shall be sure to go away much worse than we came, and shall not find a second admission so easie, as it may be some of us do think it to be.

§ II. Now if we would come aright, we must consider thus much at least before-hand. 1. That *coming* is a *motion*. If we would therefore have the *rest* that Christ promiseth, we must not give our selves rest before-hand, or resolve to lead a lazy and an idle life. 2. That it must not be a *slow motion* neither, but we must *run that we may obtain*, 1 Cor. 9. 24. It is a great way to Heaven, and sin hath set us at a great distance from God, and the time allotted us is short, and much of that already lost by many of us. As ever we hope therefore

fore to see *God*, let us set forth quickly,  
 go with what speed we can, and lose  
 no time. We must not hope, as too  
 many by their practice seem to do, that  
 we may obtain and not run, rest and  
 not labour, be happy and not be holy,  
 have the reward and do no service, tri-  
 umph and not conquer, wear the crown  
 and not finish the course, have a Savi-  
 our, go to Heaven and enjoy *God*, and  
 not walk in his way, nor keep his com-  
 mandments, nor run with patience the  
 race he hath set before us, nor use with  
 all care and conscience the helps and  
 means which his infinite wisdom and  
 goodness hath ordained. Sitting is at  
 present no easfull posture to a weary  
 Soul. He that is sensible of his load and  
 layeth himself down under it, may  
 there sigh and groan out his Soul, and  
 be pressed to death through his own  
 sloth. 3. This *motion* must be *freight and  
 direct*, right forward toward *Christ*. It  
 must not be an *irregular* or *disorderly* mo-  
 tion, it is not a running over hedges and  
 ditches or a wild roving about at ran-  
 dome, nor a picking and chusing out a way  
 that best pleaseth a man's phansie, or is  
 softest for his feet, or that which he takes

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to be the shortest cut, or where he may hope to meet with least opposition or difficulties. Too many, God knows, are apt to be led by their own wild imaginations and giddy humours, toward a Christ dressed up by their own working heads to their own liking, even till they have run themselves into a labyrinth of errors and so lose themselves irrecoverably in the confident opinion of their own eminent piety. Neither yet must it be a *violent* motion, the principles whereof is without a man. There are too many that it may be constantly frequent the publick Assemblies, and seem to worship God very orderly among their Neighbours in his religious ordinances, yea are very strict observers too of all outward Acts of Devotion, Piety and Justice, and yet from no true principle of Religion in the heart; but it may be either through fear, or shame, or some temporal or worldly advantage, something is got or something is saved by it, which they love more than true Piety: they may be either drawn or driven against their inclination: Many little engines there are to scruue a man up into a posture and

form

form of Godliness, which may be past the discovery of any other but God and themselves. If we will come to *Christ*, we must not move like a boy's gig, never right forward but when driven with the lash, and yet 'tis still winding about, and though it seem sometime to move of it self, it doth not so indeed. He that cometh to *Christ*, hath something *within* him will cause him to move; even the sense of his obligation and his need so to do, and an active heat of love, naturally tending towards the proper object of it. How much the wearier a man is of sin, so much the faster will he move, nor will there be any even and constant motion without the sense of that weight that is upon us.

§. III. These things considered, that we may be the better directed in our coming to *Christ*, we must next call to mind, *from what*, to *what*, and *how* we are to come.

1. We must remember *from what* we must come, if we will come to *Christ*. Even from *every* thing but *Christ* so far as it may prove any hindrance to us. *All things else we must learn to count but*

but loss and dung so we may win Christ. Phil. 3. 8. He himself hath exprely told us, Luke 14. 33. That whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be his disciple. And least we should think this *All* is not so comprehensive as indeed it is, but may admit of some limitation or restraint, he instanceth in the choicest and dearest of all worldly things, so that he leaveth no room for any exception, v. 26. *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

More particularly, in *coming to Christ* we must take leave of these three, *sin, the world and our selves.*

1. We must bid farewell for ever to *sin*, to *all sin*, but more solemnly to all our *best-beloved sins*, with a well fixed resolution to shun very scrupulously all the occasions of sin, and to resist all temptations to it. Sin is the heavy load we must feel, and feeling hate, and hating strive by all means to cast off. The guilt of it indeed we cannot remove, we go unto *Christ* for that: nay the *stain* and *infection* of it we cannot quite

quite put away, but come unto *Christ* for that too. But the *pleasure* of it, the *love* of it, the *willing* obedience to it, this we must be daily casting off. The true sense of the *evil* in it, whensoever *God awaketh us* and gives us it, will bring us to that. However this must be a great motive of coming to *Christ*, that we may by the power of his grace, be more and more freed from *sin*, trusting to nothing else for this freedom. It must be our resolution never to be friends with <sup>it</sup> any more, but to wage a continual *War* under *Christ's* banner against it. Many would very willingly come unto *Christ* to get a pardon for all past *sins*, this is but a natural thing, to desire to be out of danger, and to be freed from all fear of punishment. Who is there that thinketh he needs such a thing, that can chuse but desire it? Or that would not be at some pains and cost to procure it? No man is simply willing to die and be miserable. But to hate sin, to be weary of our lusts, to resist our own strongest *inclinations*, to loath all wickedness what profit, or praise, or honour, or pleasure soever of any kind it bring us in. To *love God for himself*, and *holiness* because

*God*

God is a *holy God*, and to desire from the heart to be *holy as he is holy*, and as capable as our natures can be made of honouring *God*, this is something more than natural, as nature is now corrupted in us, and this must be our great design in coming to *Christ*. Therefore let every one that nameth the name of *Christ* depart from iniquity, 2 Tim. 2. 19.

2. We must in the next place bid farewell to the *world*, to all the tempting bates and flattering allurements of the world; to all the honours, and pleasures, and profits of the world, so far as they are temptations to evil or obstacles to good, though never so fair, sweet, lovely and rich. *For the friendship of this world is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be a friend of this world is the enemy of God*, Jam. 4. 4. And St. John warneth us, *Not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world, for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 15. And as we must renounce the *things* of the world as they stand in our way to *Christ*, so also the *men* of the world, as the enemies of *Christ*. As our *Saviour* on another occasion said

to his disciples, so must we suppose him to say unto us, when he commandeth us to come unto him. *Come your selves apart*, Matt. 6. 31. *If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner*, the Apostle warneth us *not to keep company with such an one, no not to eat*, 1 Cor. 5. 11.

3. Yea, lastly, we must bid adieu to our selves, that is, to all that is carnal or sinfull in us. Our lusts and ambitions, our interests and humours, our corrupt reasonings and wills, all must be laid down at the feet of Christ. We must put off the old man which is corrupt with all his desires and works, and come to put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. 4 22. & 24. Christ himself hath told us it very plainly, Mark 8. 34. *That whosoever will come after him, must deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow him*. He must be willing and ready to do, lose or suffer any thing, he must have no regard to his own carnal will or desires, he must set light by his pleasures and worldly contentments, so that he may come to Jesus.

§ IV. These things, thus briefly touched, we must wholly forsake, even as we *promise* and *vow* to do when we first set forth towards *Christ in Baptism*. Whenever therefore we love, humour or adhere to any of these, we go so far backwards again from *Christ*. And alas, how far are many of us thus gone from him, who then vowed to continue with him for ever? How is this vow, so solemnly made to the blessed Trinity, in the face of the Church, quite forgotten or wholly disregarded by the most, and, it may be, never once seriously thought on by many since the day they made it? If the lives of the generality of those who have been *baptized* be to be credited, nothing can be plainer, than that they are nothing less, than what they then engaged to be, true *Christians*, nothing at all of *Christianity* appearing in them. By the whole course of many men's conversation a man would verily think, that instead of promising what they did, they had indeed sworn all that is contrary to it, that they are most scrupulous in performing it to the very minutest circumstance. What if men had

ied themselves by all the strongest bonds in the world, to follow the devil and all his works, to love the pomps and vanities of the wicked world, and to fulfill all the lusts of the flesh; to renounce Christ and his Gospel, and never to keep any of God's commandments? How could any man demonstrate to the world his great care to keep such an oath more convincingly, than by leading such lives in all respects as very many now do who have vowed the contrary in *Baptism*? There is not any thing in the world that such men more thirstingly desire, or with greater impatience long for, and hunt after with all their might and skill, than these very things which in their *Baptism* they renounced. The works of the devil, even those works which Christ came to destroy, and they have vow'd under him to fight against, they will do whatsoever it cost them. They that promised to renounce all worldly pomps and vanities, set their affections altogether upon them, with all their heart and soul cleave unto them, love, worship, spend all their strength, labour, study, time, and whatever ought to be most precious, in labouring for them.

them. The *flesh*, their carnal selves, their own corrupt wills, lusts and desires, make up the great *Idol* and *Belly-god* that devoureth all, for which all things are sought with much labour, bought at an unreasonable rate; to which they are all freely sacrificed. *Finally*, for which they are so madly zealous, that they perfectly hate, and would gladly destroy every thing or person that will not humor, worship and serve it. All this considered, which is but too visible and cannot be hid, what a very few of those great numbers which are *baptized*, can with any appearance of truth be said to have yet made so much as one step towards *Christ*? Nay we cannot perswade the greater number of them so much as to think on what they have promised, nor to be at the small pains to learn by short and easie *Catechisms* what that promise meant; and fewer yet will be brought to the serious publick owning of it, and a professing of their resolution to keep it in *Confirmation*. And yet all of them will needs pass for *Christians*, and think themselves much injured, if they be denied any of the priviledges

ledges which belong to *Christians*. O that men would a little better consider what they do, and whither it is that they are going all this while. If this be the way to *Christ*, or to *rest*, then is the *broad way*, the *onely way* that leadeth unto *life*, and *few* there be that walk in the way to destruction ; then hath *Christ* deceived us when he told us the contrary , and men are saved not by *faith* but by *unbelief*, not by coming to *Christ* but by going from him. Let us again and again think of this, and before that we venture any more thus to *mock God*, be sure that we do not *deceive* our selves. Ere we dare to call our selves by the name of *Christ*, and to flatter our selves with hopes of eternal rest by him, consider well what it is that he requireth of us, what *Christianity* doth indeed import, and what cost it may possibly put us to, what force and strength is necessary to encounter all that may oppose us, and to struggle through the difficulties we may meet with. Reade consideringly the Parables, *Luke 14. 28. 31.* and be admonished by them to go to work advisedly. It is for want of understanding or

Considering this, that we walk as gen-  
erally two do, and go on with so much  
confidence of life in the paths of de-  
struction. ~~slightly~~ with the going on you

§. V. 2. In the next place therefore, having seen what we must leave behind us, and go from; let us inform ourselves well who it is that we are going to. I. Learn to know him well, what kind of person he is; least we mistake for him some false Christ of our own making. 2d. Learning to know the way wherein he will be found, and given free access. 3d. and 4th. And then of course

12 Learn to know Christ perfectly; observe punctually how he is described unto us by his own Spirit in his word; Let us make sure of this, that it be the very Christ indeed that we have before our eyes in our walking. That eternal and only Son of God, ordained of the Father before the foundation of the world; promised to the fathers from the beginning of the world so shadowed forth in many types and figures; foretold by many Prophets; and, lastly, exhibited unto the world in fulness of time in our flesh, and now at the right hand

hand of the *Father* in heaven in highest Glory and Majesty. We must first labour to be well assured that this same *Jesus* is he, the *Anointed of the Lord* to be the *Saviour* of the world. For it cannot be reasonable to suppose that any man will hold out in the way through all the difficulties he may possibly meet with in it, if he be not fully satisfied, that this is the very *Saviour* sent of *God* to bring him to *rest*. Yet is not this all, but we must farther rightly inform our selves what *manner* of *Saviour* he is. A *Saviour* we would all have, there is no question to be made of that, and such an one he truly is: but let us consider it well, as before we heard, he is our *Saviour*, as he is a *Mediator between God and Men*. And as to this end he is partaker of both natures: *He is the man Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. And he is the true *God over all blessed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. So he came to reconcile *God* and *Man*, and set them at one again; and we must come unto him, as unto *God*; unto the *Father* in *him* and by *him*: even as unto the *Holy God*, before whom no unclean thing must appear; the onely *Good* upon

which all our love must be placed; the chief and ultimate end, unto which all our desires, designs and endeavours are to be directed. He is our *Saviour*, but to save us, he is to teach us; to guide us, and govern us. We cannot come unto him as a *Saviour*, but by becoming his *Scholars* and learning of him as the great *teacher come from God*, as the *Prophet* whom we are to hear in all things, and by following him as the great *Exemplar* of all holiness, having the same *mind in us that was in him*, Phil. 2. 5. *Learning of him to be meek and lowly of heart*, Matt. 11. 29. Giving our selves into his hands to be *conformed to his Image*, Rom. 8. 29. To *tread in his steps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. Both in a clearfull doing and patient suffering the will of the *Father*, in a total conformity to him both in his death and resurrection. And *lastly*, by resigning our selves intirely to his ordering and disposal, as those that are *his own, whom he hath bought with a price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. Disclaiming all farther right in and over our selves than he is pleased to allow us, not chusing for our selves our own work or condition as best suiteth with our own *wills*.

wills and inclinations, but contenting our selves with his choice, allowance and appointment: Yielding absolute obedience to his laws, desirous that he may totally subdue our lusts, enthronē himself solely in our hearts, and rule himself alone within us and over us. If we look for any other *Saviour*, but such an one as this, we do but deceive our selves, and go to some creature of our own phansie instead of coming to the *Lord our Saviour*. *If then we be his sheep, we will bear his voice and follow him, and the voice of strangers will we not bear, John 10. 3, 5.* Knowing and following him, we will confide in him, as our onely strength and tower, and sure rock of salvation. But, *why, saith he, call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say unto you, Luke 6. 46.* So far is he from being a *Saviour* to such as obey not his *Gospel*, that he hath assured us; that *all they that will not have him to reign over them, shall, as his enemies be brought forth, and slain before him, Luke 19. 17.*

§. VI. 2. When we have thus learn'd truly to know him, it will now be easie

for us to learn in what *ways* or by what *means*, we may have access unto him. *1. We must come unto him in his Word*, believing verily the truth of every word that proceedeth out of his mouth, and feeding upon it as the most savoury and wholesome food of our Souls.

*2. Receive his Promises, and nourish our hope with them, never suffering our Souls, no not in the midst of persecutions or torments, to faint, droop or despair. In all things comforting and clearing up our hearts, with this sure confidence, that he is faithfull who hath promised, and that all things shall undoubtedly work together for good to those that love him, Rom. 8. 28. This hope thus grounded on his promises is the sure anchor of our Souls, Heb. 6. 19. That must hold them firm and steady, else shall we never be able to bear up against the winds and waves which may beat upon us.*

*3. We must come unto him in his Merits, with a sure Trust and Confidence, that how many and great soever the sins may be which we labour under, they*

they are not enough to dismay us from coming unto him, or to sink us in the way to him, if in good earnest we set forward. Though they be like so many weights of lead; enough of themselves to press down our Souls to the lowest Hell, yet are his *merits* sufficient to bear us up, and exalt us to the highest Heaven. Though they be as *crimson* or *scarlet*, yet his bloud hath vertue enough to make us as white as *snow* or *wooll*. Seven Devils shall not be able to drag one poor woman to Hell, if she can but come to *Christ*, they shall all flee before him.

3. We must come unto him in his *precepts* or *commands*, by a sincere *obedience*; and howsoever flesh and bloud may be affrighted at the sight of them, and perswade us from touching them, possessing us with hard thoughts of them, as of things intollerale; and with troublesome fears of losing all our present ease and comforts by them, always clamouring within us, saying, 'Master spare thy self; Yet must we not give ear to any thing of this, but stoutly and resolutely put forward, girding up our loins, setting in earnest about our work,,

work, and persevering unto the end, trusting in his strength that calleth us, and will enable us to do and suffer any thing for his sake.

2. Come unto him as our *Head* and *Governour* and *Sovereign Lord*, and with all *subjection* and *humility*, with all *submission* and due *reverence* resigning our selves freely to him, our persons and all our concerns at once, how many or great soever. Worshipping his *Majesty*, obeying his commands, imitating his *goodness*, and relying on his *providence* and *protection*. And here we are to remember that he hath officers and servants upon earth, both *Magistrates* and *Ministers*.

We must come unto him in *Kings* and *Governours*, and be *subject* to them for *conscience sake*, Rom. 13. 5. Obeying every *ordinance* of *man* for the *Lord's sake*, 1 Pet. 2. 13. And although we should suffer for *well-doing*, yet take it *patiently*, knowing that this is *acceptable to the Lord*, 1 Pet. 2. 20. Our *obedience* unto *Cæsar* is a *debt* we owe unto *Christ*, and therefore except we render unto *Cæsar* the *things* that are *Cæsar's*, we cannot render unto *Christ* the *things* that

that are *Christ's*. There can be no *resisting* the *Magistrate* on pretence that he would drive us from *Christ*, for he cannot drive us from him except we will, we may follow him even to the *Cross* when the *Magistrate* hath done all he can.

We must come unto him in his *Ministers*, with due honour, attention and affection, as unto those his *Servants* who are sent forth by him to invite us, to lead us, to encourage us, under him to govern us in the conduct of our *Souls*, to take us by the hand, and strengthen us in his paths, least we slip, or fall, or faint, or go astray. If we refuse to come to these, to hearken diligently to their directions, to be guided willingly by their hand, to love and honour them highly for their works sake, we shall not easily come unto our and their great *Lord* and *Master*, with whom we hope to rest.

3. We must come unto him in *all* his holy *ordinances* of religious worship, in *Prayer*, in *Preaching*, in the *Sacraments*, with true devotion, fervency and zeal, with an hungering and thirsting after *righteousness*, with an earnest desire and

and longing to be satisfied with the far-  
ness of his house, and the fulness of his  
Table. If we refuse to come unto him  
in his house, the Assembly of his  
Saints, amongst two or three gathered  
together in his name, in the midst of  
whom he hath promised to be ; we have  
less cause to hope he will meet us in our  
closets, or as many had rather have it,  
in our beds.

In short, come unto him in all these,  
upon the *Cross*, and embrace him, and  
suffer with him ; on the *Mount*, and in  
the *Pulpit*, and hearken to him and be  
taught by him ; on the *Throne*, and be  
subject to him, adore, obey, and be fa-  
vored by him. Such are the ways we  
must walk in if we would come to  
Christ.

**§ VII.** Let us now briefly see how  
we are to come. Come. 1. As Men-  
laden. 2. As unto Christ. 3. As for-  
rest.

1. Come as they that are heavy laden,  
that are truly weary, that long to cast  
off their load.

1. With a very humbling sense of our  
condition ; let it be seen that we feel and  
under-

understand what vile things we are, and that we are ashamed of our selves and of the filth we carry.

2. With a perfect hatred of our burden, and that especially because it unsuits us for honouring *God*, and is dishonourable to him.

3. With an hearty desire, and full resolution to cast it off so soon as possibly we can, diligently attending to all diversions, and carefully using all means commended unto us to that purpose.

4. Come then as men that feel themselves uneasy, and can have no rest in their hearts, no quiet in their minds, no satisfaction in themselves, but feel always something like a sharp goad prickling them forward to *Christ*.

2. Come as unto *Christ*, as unto one of whom we are very sure that he is both able and willing to ease us.

1. Laying open all our grievances impartially in an humble confession before him.

2. Humbly acknowledging our great unworthiness of any such mercy as we come to receive of him.

3. Earnestly begging and importuning him with our most fervent prayers to pity us. Take no denial.

4. Care-

4. Carefully using all the helps he offereth us, and putting forth all the strength he giveth us.

5. Cheerfully accepting his own terms, accounting it a great happiness that we may change our heavy burden for a lighter. Let us willingly bow down and offer our necks to his *easy yoke*, our backs to his *light burden*; this is the onely way to be free from *Satan's* slavery, to let him see we are engaged in *Christ's* service.

3. Come as they that *know* and *prize* what they come for. And so,

1. Let us come with much *joy* and *cheerfulness*, the very hope of being at rest giveth ease to the weary: let us shew how much we are affected with this liberty of coming to *Christ*. Away with all dejected and cloudy looks, least we seem to come unwillingly, to find no pleasure in the way, or little hope of speeding. This were to dishearten others by bringing up an evil report of the way we walk in.

2. Let our ears be closed against all the solicitations of the world and its vanities, our own flesh and its cravings, the Devil and his terrors and threatenings.

nings. How loud soever these cry after us, how much soever they court us to return, let us have no ear open to them, but go on.

3. Let us come with all *haste*, seek him to day while he may be found, call upon him whilst he calls upon us. It is no sign that we are weary of our burden, if we would fain carry it a while longer. That man was never truly sensible of his disease, who when his Physician would cure him, desireth to be sick yet one day more. Now *Christ* declareth himself ready to receive all comers, to give audience to all their petitions. If we let slip this opportunity, we are not sure of another. We never heard amongst all *Christ*'s invitations, that ever he invited any one to come to morrow. One would but have gone to bid them farewell at home, and another would have gone to bury his Father, but *Christ* would allow of neither, *Luk.* 9.59. The foolish *Virgins* that stay'd behind their fellows were shut out for ever, *Mat.* 25. If we would come in time let us set forth now. 'Tis dangerous to think of going to *Christ* towards the evening. So many mists and vapours

pours, so many Thieves and Robbers, so much darkness and such bad eyes about the Sun setting, the evening of old Age ; so many Ghosts and frightfull apparitions are said to be in the night and near the grave, that if we defer our going till then, a thousand to one we shall lose our way, or the door may be shut, and after much calling and crying, *Lord open to us*, we shall have no other answer, but, *Be gone, I know you not, depart ye cursed.*

## CHAP. III.

**H**aving said these things very briefly, because they have been already more largely spoken of, there remains now but *two* things to be added. 1. A word or *two* more to the careless sinners, to make them, if it may be, a little more sensible of their folly in delaying to accept of this invitation. 2. An encouragement to those disconsolate Christians that trouble themselves with doubts and fears that they are not come, when indeed they are.

§. I. I. And

¶ I. I. And *first*, is it not a thing very wonderfull, yea, can you chuse but wonder at your selves, all you, I say, who have the greatest need of the mercy which is here offered, that after it hath been so often offered, and you have been so earnestly intreated to accept it, so that a man cannot imagine what *Christ* should do more, unless he should force it upon you against your will, and that would imply a contradiction, to give a man rest against his will, is to give him no rest : Is it not a wonder, that after all this hath been done by *Christ*, you should yet refuse your own welfare, and continue wilfully sick, and every moment at death's dooring, when the *Physician* standeth over you and intreateth you to accept of his help and be well ? To see so many lame *Cripplers* lying in the porches of *Bethesda*, so many *Lepers* sitting on the banks of *far-dan*, so many sick folks troubled with divers diseases lying in the *high-ways*, where *Christ* is dayly passing by, and so few healed ? Is not the *Angel* always ready to move the waters, and calling on you to step in quickly and be whole ?

Are

Are not the Prophets dayly calling out unto you, bidding you in God's name to wash and be clean? Is not a touch of the very *border* of Christ's Garment sufficient to heal us all? To see so many weary travailers continually passing by the place of ease and refreshment, where there is never wanting one or other of Christ's Servants standing at the gate, and inviting them most heartily to turn in and refresh themselves: is not this strange indeed? Let any man but hearken to the common cries of the world, and he shall hear almost nothing on any side, but grievous complaints, sad outcries, pitifull mournings and lamentations. Come and go as often as he will, and still he shall hear the same sad notes; here a groan, and there a grumbling; every where sowl countenances, and clouded foreheads speak discontented hearts, and restless minds. Every one is complaining of a load of one sort or other, though it be but that which his own conceit hath made and laid upon him.

Some we see labouring and toiling hard for a very poor and scanty lively-hood in this world, finding the hearts of others

others harder than their own labours, complaining how hardly the world goes with them, and that their hands are not able with all their painfull labour to fill the hungry bellies of Wife and Children. Others lie sick upon their uneasie beds, how soft soever they be, and the whole house is filled with the sighs and groans of the sick, and the tears and lamentations of sorrowfull Relations and Friends, who suppose all their comforts and hopes expiring at once with a dying Father or Mother, Husband or Wife, Child or Friend. Others walk and sit and lie with heads laden with cares and contrivances, hourly tormented with multitudes of anxious and distracting thoughts, and their hearts even broken with unthought of disappointments, great losses, dayly crosses and inconveniences, their discontented Souls fretting their bodies, and consuming their flesh to the very bone by a continual gnawing. Many more there be in a worse condition than any of these, sweating uncessantly in the wretched drudgery of their tyrannizing lusts, without any possibility of giving them satisfaction; tying themselves in *drawing iniquity with cords*

cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a  
 Cart-rope, Isa. 5. 18. Wearying themselves  
 to commit iniquity, Jer. 9. 5. and never  
 have enough of it. One man hath lost  
 his friends, another his estate, a third  
 his liberty. One cannot obtain his suit,  
 another is frustrated in his hope, a third  
 is not seated in the world to his mind.  
 Many have long laboured for the wind,  
 and miscarry in those great designs and  
 projects they have for many years been  
 big with. Here's a poor man crying  
 out because he hath nothing, and there's  
 a rich man grumbling that he hath not  
 all, or as much more than enough as o-  
 thers have less than he. Here's an am-  
 bitious spirit fuming that he is not above  
 all the world, and there's an envious soul  
 even dying because he seeth any one in  
 a better condition than himself: And  
 there's a voluptuous Epicure angry  
 that he dares not sin as freely as he ea-  
 teth. Where can a man go, but he  
 shall find those, that rather than not be  
 so, will make themselves miserable, yea,  
 and with much pains contrive how to  
 continue their own vexation, and yet  
 are continually complaining of it. One  
 man is vexed by another, and another

doth all he can to vex others, and every  
 man is most of all vexed by himself.  
 Some have laboured, and gained so much  
 of what they would have by their wicked  
 labour, that nothing is so grievous  
 to them as to be made to rest from their  
 gainfull trouble. Others have laboured  
 so long under oppression and want, that  
 they cannot rest, till they see their opp-  
 pressours labour as much in the same  
 kind as they have done. Here's one  
 that hath climbed up to the highest Pi-  
 nacle on fortunes Temple, and now is  
 troubled to maintain his footing and his  
 height, being suspected by some, shot at  
 by others, envied by many, loved by  
 few. There's another that thinketh,  
 though he hath not yet got so high, he  
 hath at least deserved it as well, and vex-  
 eth himself to see another, as he thinks,  
 where the place would best become him-  
 self. Who can think upon one half of  
 those labouring Souls that are in the  
 world. And must it not now seem very  
 wonderfull, that ease and rest should be  
 so plainly laid open before them all, and  
 yet hardly one of a thousand aiming at it?  
 All want, and all would have it, but  
 few will come unto Christ for it: as if  
 men

men scorn'd all ease that is not the fruit  
 of their own contrivance, or thought it  
 below them to be beholden unto Christ  
 for a rest of his procuring. He is ready  
 to satiate every weary Soul, and to re-  
 plenish every sorrowfull Soul, Jer. 31. 25.  
*He hath prepared a Kingdom for them  
 who are persecuted for righteousness sake.*  
 Matt. 5. 10. *He hath bid us by his Apostle  
 to cast all our care upon him, for he careth  
 for us. He would heal the broken-hearted,  
 and preach deliverance to the Captives, re-  
 covery of sight to the blind, and set at lib-  
 erty them that are bruised,* Luk. 4. 18.  
*How sad a thing is it now to think that  
 any of us should be so blinded by our  
 lusts, as not to see all this goodness of  
 the Lord, or so befooled by the Devil  
 and the world as not to embrace it. But  
 oh ! what a killing sight is it to see many  
 and many proud of their yoke, boasting of  
 their burden, swaggering in their chains,  
 vaunting themselves of their infirmities,  
 esteeming it cowardice to fear an Hell,  
 pusillanimity and unmanly weakness to  
 tremble at God's Judgments, mourn for  
 sin, or cry out to God for help. How  
 long will men keep at this distance from  
 Christ ?*

In Christ's name, let us all be better advised, and perswaded to accept of a Saviour. Why should we wear out our bodies, and beat our brains, and lose our Souls in carking and toiling night and day for *vanity and vexation of Spirit*? why should we suffer so many vain sorrows to overwhelm us? Why should we sit fretting and chafing because our condition is not suitable to our desires? We see here before us a sovereign remedy for all diseases, a compendious way to be eased at once of all troubles. *Come unto Christ*, and all our sorrowfull days are at an end. Let us then in good earnest resolutely bid adieu to all our sinfull lusts, and empty delights, our carnal desires and proud thoughts, and come to Christ and we are safe.

§. II. 2. Now in the *last* place, if there be among us any *weak* and *faint-hearted Christians*, that long for nothing more than the happiness to be Christ's Disciples, but have such a low opinion of themselves as that they count themselves too unworthy to be admitted into that holy society: the word of comfort and encouragement belongeth unto them especially.

K

Some

Some poor Souls are always speaking terroure and affliction to themselves, and think so much what themselves are, that they cannot well consider what Christ is. Alas, saith one, I am so foul all over, so deformed by my sins, that I am ashamed to look towards Heaven. I am so vile a sinner, a sinner of so long standing, I have lost so much time, and despised so much grace, and committed so many sins, that I dare not come, or hope that there can be any rest for me.

To such I shall say but this. Consider well what manner of persons they be whom Christ inviteth, and then see if you do not find your selves among them. Are you indeed sensible that you are most vile sinners? and are you really ashamed of your selves? Have you a hearty desire to be made better, and to doe better for the remaining part of your life? Would you not onely have a *pardon* for your *sins*, but *grace* to make you *holy*, and enable you to serve and honour the *holy God*? Be no more afraid, you are the persons Christ calleth unto, you may come and be welcome. You are in a special manner to be encouraged *least you be swallowed up of over much grief.*

grief, 2 Cor. 2. 7. The Ministers of Christ are sent forth with commision to comfort the feeble minded, and to support the weak, 1 Thes. 5. 14. As the Father sent Christ, so hath Christ sent his Ministers, to call sinners, lost sinners, the very worst of sinners to *repentance*. They therefore can very confidently say to all such as you are, as those did to blind Bartimeus, Mar. 10. 49. *Be of good comfort, rise, be calleth you.* What reason can such as you have to fear? Hath not God from the very beginning manifested to the world the goodness of his nature, and his forwardness to shew mercy? *He is good to all, and his mercy is over all his works*, Psal. 14. 5. *His mercy endureth for ever.* Shew your selves where he hath excepted you, when he saith he is good to all. Christ hath purchased a pardon, and commanded that repentance and remission of sins be preached to all Nations in his name: shew then where you are excluded from this mercy. If you cannot shew this, what reason can you have to exclude your selves? How many Devils did he cast out of *Mary Magdalen*? Suppose as many in you, is he now either less able, or less willing to

cast them all out ? How many *Publi-cans* and *Sinners* did he freely converse with, and kindly receive, even to the lessening of his own reputation with a censorious generation of people ? Suppose your selves as bad as the worst of them, hath he not told you, that whosoever cometh to him he will in no wise cast out ? Think upon a blaspheming and persecuting *Saul*, and see what reason you can have to doubt of acceptance upon your conversion. You have heard what joy there is in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth. You have read God likening himself unto a man that to seek one sheep of an hundred that was gone astray, left the ninety and nine in the Wilderness, till he found it, and rejoiced more at the finding of it, than in all the rest : And again to a tender *Father*, hastening forth to meet, embracing, kissing, for very joy weeping over, cloathing, feasting his prodigal Child exhausted with riotous living, when he in his great want, pinched by necessity and hunger returned unto him , *Luk. 15.* Have you not heard his promise that though our sins be as Scarlet, he will make us as white as Wool ? Hath he not

not assured us, that if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all his statutes, and do that which is lawfull and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed shall not be mentioned unto him, Ezek. 18. 21, 22.

§. III. *Dispute* then no longer against God's goodness, and your own Souls, whilst God useth all means to encourage you and give you hope. But rather observe and beware of the wicked cunning of our malicious adversary the *Devil*, and see what a master men serve whilst they give ear to his temptations and suggestions. His *first* work is to blind men so, as they shall discern no danger before them, and then he pusheth them forward into presumption, and a most unreasonable courage to disobey God and sin. His *next* work is by the sweetness and pleasures of sin to cast them into a deep sleep of inconsideration and security, and to fill them with delightfull dreams of peace and safety, and to keep them by any means he can invent, insensible of the wounds they have received, least the smart should awake them, and bring

them to themselves again, and they should begin to think of returning to God. He loads men first, and then contrives ways of keeping them insensible of the weight, and by all his wiles diverts them from all serious thoughts of their wretched condition into which he hath tempted them. Now if he can hold them here (and they are not a few that he keepeth thus secure and regardless of their Souls even all their days) then he hath them sure enough, they sport and play with sin, and make a mock of it, they laugh at, or are angry with all their friends that pity them, and tell them of their load, whilst they feel it not ; they follow their leader merrily and jovially to destruction, and are rarely disturbed with any check from their own consciences. But if now it shall please God by any act of his providence a little to awake them, and they once but begin to lift up their eyes and look about them, and see all the dangers in the midst whereof he hath set them, *then* his chief business is to load their Souls with sad fears and doubtings, that there is no way to escape, that they are so far gone that there is no hope at all of recovery ; and now

now is his season of suggesting to them black thoughts of *God* and *Jesus Christ*, and then to set home these very suggestions of his own with that force upon their consciences, that they shall conclude their sins to be unpardonable, and that it is now too late to repent, that the day of grace is over, that they have sinned too much and too long to be forgiven, that there is no thinking now of coming unto *Christ* for rest: He driveth them past all hope, and sinketh them down into despair with such sad thoughts as these, and perswadeth them it is as good to stay where they are, as to trouble themselves farther to no purpose. Be not therefore, if you regard your happiness, any longer ignorant of his devices. Neither be allured by his flatteries to serve him any longer in sin to your own destruction; nor terrified by his false suggestions from coming unto *Christ* for your salvation. Let him neither hire you by the pleasures and profits of sin to carry that foul and heavy load any longer with patience; nor perswade you to lie down by the way sighing and groaning under it, when *Christ* calleth you to rest.

¶. IV. If you be now thus far satisfied, that *Satan* designeth you nothing but mischief, and *Christ* intendeth you all that is good: If you be convinced that the way is yet open, and you may come; let nothing binder you, but come with all resolution, alacrity and speed. Are you unworthy to come to *Christ*? He very well knew that before he called you, and would not have called you, if that must necessarily hinder you. Whom must he invite if not the unworthy? Your sense of your own unworthiness, your desire to be more worthy, your applying your selves to him for his grace to make you so, your obedience to his call and command, is all the worthiness he expecteth. Want you strength to come? He knoweth that as well, and what his own strength can do in your weakness. He that calleth you is ready to strengthen you, and though of your selves you can do nothing, yet may you do all things through *Christ* that strengtheneth you, Phil. 4. 13. Are you willing? There's your strength. Think it not reasonable to plead your want of strength, whilst you find in your selves a want of will; and when you find no want of will,

will, you shall find no cause to complain of your want of *strength*. Christ biddeth you onely do what you *can*, and trust to *him* for what you *cannot* do. Make use of all the strength you have, call upon him in fervent prayer for more, and then rely upon *his* strength and not your *own*.

Do multitudes of businesses interrupt and hinder you? Cast but of all that is too much, which it is most reasonable to doe, and you shall have little enough. What is moderate and needfull can be no hinderance, and what is superfluous neither needs nor ought to be so. Is your business *sinfull* and *dishonest*? Away with it, it is no work of *yours*, but a drudgery the *Devil* would put you to: Is it *needfull* and *honest*, it is your work and duty, it is a task that *Christ* hath set you, and cannot hinder you from coming to him. It is that which must employ you in the way to Heaven, and keep you too busie for the *Devil*, so that he cannot find you at leisure to hearken to him.

Is there a *Cross* in the way, poverty and disgrace, and many afflictions grievous to be born, many severities and hard duties unwelcome to the flesh? Is

the gate strait, and the way narrow, and the company little ? It may be so indeed altogether, and it must be so in some measure ; and then if these things affright us, we may if we please sit still, and famish, and die, and what shall we get by all this foolish pity we have for our selves ? Will not this *Cross* bring you to a *Crown* ? Will not this *poverty* fit you for the durable *riches*, treasures in *Heaven* ? Will not this light affliction which is but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ? 2 Cor. 4. 17. Hath not Christ assured us that if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him, 2 Tim. 2. 12. Rom. 8. 17.

They that are apt to affright themselves from Christ with the thoughts of the sufferings and hardships in their way, which they fear they shall never be able to struggle through, should do well to consider, besides the glorious reward which is enough to animate them with courage against the very worst things they can fear, and the promise of success and victory to all that fight in earnest, these few things. First, do not men suffer often as bitter things, and perform

perform as hard tasks, and undergo as wearisome labours, and run as many hazards of what in the world they most value, even of health and life for things of very small worth here in earth? And is not *God* and *Heaven* for which we come to *Christ* worth as much? *Secondly*, remember that these sufferings we so much fear are not certain, nor always the lot of every *Christian*, the *Cross* is onely then to be taken up and born, when it lieth in our way, but it lieth not always there, nor to all. Such things may happen, and they may not, as *God* feeth it good; and thus it is in all other things we can go about. *Thirdly*, when *God* calleth to sufferings, we have all the advantages of others, we have warning before-hand, and are bid to expect them and be ready for them, not because they will certainly come, but that, if they come, they may by our preparation fall the lighter on us: and we are bid to suffer with patience and courage, because that will make them easier, and tollerable, which otherwise they would not be. Evils, whenever they come, must be born whether we be willing or not; and impatience always maketh

maketh them heavier, and worse, and the comfort is none at all. So those *Christian* duties which we think so hard, are onely hard to them that understand them not, and have not learn'd them, and what is not so? They are hard a-while at the beginning to novices; as we grow more perfect, they grow more easie, and in time very pleasant. Next, that *flesh* and *bloud* to which these things are grievous, is that *which shall not enter the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 15. 50. And this way, how rough and thorny soever is the way to endless delights, and the strait gate the entrance into a glorious Heaven.

Consider all this seriously, and then remember what cost and pains you have been at already to purchase meer trifles; how often and long you have laboured and sweat for just nothing, for what hath yielded you no satisfaction at all, and then you cannot think it an uneasie task to come to *Christ* for ease and refreshment, though you must be at some pains in so doing.

§. V. There is yet one thing spoken of already, which it is fit here to mind you

you of again, your comfort and encouragement dependeth so much upon it. Be sure that you be truly weary of your load of sin. This you may think a needless caution, you are so weary of it, you say, that herein lieth all your trouble, you are weary but can find no ease. But there may be a mistake, and you may be restlesly weary, and dot truly weary of sin. It is not a being very weary of some particular sins, that will prepare you for rest. You may be weary of some sins because they are burdensome to your natural constitution and temper, or because you find them enemies to your bodily health, or your worldly interests, or your reputation among men: They suit not it may be with your safety, or your ease. It may be they rob your families, and eat the bread out of your Children's mouths; or they displease your Relations and friends on whose love and favour you have some dependance; or it may be they cross some other more powerfull lust or predominant affection to some other sin as bad or worse. Many persons may for such causes as these be very weary of many sins, and perfectly hate them, and.

and resist all temptations to them, and yet not be truly weary of sin. A lazy man that loveth his ease and quiet is quickly weary of all strife and contention, or any other sin that createth him pains and trouble. A sickly man will soon be weary of gluttony, drunkenness and whoredom, or any other sin which he feels apt to make him more sickly. An ambitious and popular man may be weary of niggardliness and baseness, or whatever lesseneth his esteem and reputation with men, and is inconsistent with his ambitious designs. The covetous person hateth luxury and rioting, and every sin that is costly and expensive. The timorous are weary of such sins as are severely punishable by the laws, and the bashfull of all sins, as well as virtues, that are not in fashon. Now all these are in love still with some sins for the very same reason for which they hate others. And indeed are displeased with some onely because they would hinder them from a more full enjoyment of those they love best. They are weary of sin for sins sake, but of no sin purely for God's sake, whom they cannot truly love and honour without forsaking every sin.

fin. The good man must *hate every evil way*, Psal. 119. 104. And it is not this or that sin, but sin in general we must be weary of; and so those of which we are naturally apt to be fondeft, will find no more favour than the rest, nay of them we will be most weary, because they stick closest to us and most molest us in our way to *Christ*.

Again, we are weary it may be of the outward acts of sin, and are very carefull not to be guilty of any of them, whether they be acts of impiety, injustice or intemperance, and we may be perswaded to this by many motives; But if we be truly weary of sin, we are also as weary of the inward corruption of the heart of every inclination of the Soul unto evil, of all the spiritual wants that we find in our selves, want of the true love of God, the coldness and weak degrees of love, want of humility and the fear of God. We must be weary of our flowness and backwardness to duty, of our many omissions, and neglects, and aversions of heart from prayer, and holy meditation, and self-examination, and improving in knowledge and governing our passi-

passions, and doing good, all the good that is in our power to doe. Weary we should be of all our idle and vain thoughts, and not be eatie till we can more mortifie our lusts, and tame our flesh, and bring our whole man to a more free and willing and universal compliance with and conformity to the will of God.

We must therefore take heed that we be not weary of sin onely because the fears of evils that attend it, as the rod of correction or chastisement whereby we sometimes are made to smart for it, and the tormenting thoughts of future judgment and punishment which often make us sad and melancholy and to tremble with *Felix*. The checks and secret rebukes of our awakened consciences may be very troublesome to us because they interrupt our mirth, and break our sleep, and we are weary not of the sin, but of the sense of sin, and our desire is not so much to be free from it, as from the trouble of it ; *that is*, we could still be content to sin and dishonour God, so we could do it quietly and not torment our selves. This we must make sure of, that it is sin, all that is filthy and odious to God and unworthy of the nature God hath

hath given us, that we are weary of. However we may be weary of sin for other reasons, as indeed there are innumerable reasons why we should be weary of it and hate it, yet if it be not chiefly for this, that it is against the honour and will of God, we are not weary of it to the purpose. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil*, Psal. 97. 10. Let the *love* we have for *God* beget in us the *hatred* of sin, and all will be well.

Here indeed is the true cause why so few come unto *Christ*. Either we do not consider, till we be fully convinced that we are so great sinners as indeed we are, or we do not understand the nature of sin so well, as to think it so odious to *God*, so contrary to his holy nature, and so inconsistent with his honour as indeed it is, or we have not learn'd to *love God* so well, as to abhor every thing that is displeasing to him; and hence we are not weary of sin at all for *his* sake, but merely for our *own*. Let us but once be brought to this, to have a due *esteem* of *God* and a *love* to him as the *chief good*, and fountain of goodness, and be desirous to part with every thing that is offensive to him, and  
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hindereth us from honouring him and  
injoying him, and we shall easily be  
perswaded to accept him offering him-  
self unto us in *Christ Jesus* as our onely  
and perfect happiness. We shall thus con-  
clude all disputes. *God* is an infinite good;  
he made us to communicate of his  
goodness unto us, 'tis nothing but sin  
makes us share so little in his goodness,  
it is *Christ Jesus* alone that can free us  
from this sin, he calleth us to himself to  
this end, that being freed from sin we  
may both love and enjoy *God* and all  
*goodness* in him, to him therefore we  
will come that resting from sin, we  
may rest in the fulness of goodness for  
evermore.

¶ VI. But yet we sometimes hear dis-  
consolate *Christians* thus complaining of  
themselves. We find our selves fully  
convinced of the infinite *goodness* of  
*God*, and both of the *sufficiency* and  
*willingness* of *Christ* to save men from  
their sins. We are satisfied that we are  
grievous sinners, and have great need  
of such a *Saviour*; and are so weary of  
our sins because we dishonour *God* by  
them, that we would give all that we  
have

have to be freed from them, yea, we would willingly die any the bitterest death just now, so we might be assured that *God is our God*, and *Christ our Saviour*, and all our sins taken away, that we might for ever perfectly love and honour *God*. We labour all we can to *come unto Christ* to this purpose, that we may be set free from this burden that so oppresseth us that we cannot serve and honour *God* as we desire to do. And for this we have no quiet in our hearts night nor day, because we feel sin still in our selves, and because we can love *God* no better, nor make any more progress in the ways of *Christ* than yet we do. We would do any thing, or suffer any thing in the world, so we might honour *God* in obeying *Christ*, whom we so firmly believe to be the *Saviour* of sinners, that we have no hope in any other, and we are desirous above all things to be wholly at his command, and our great trouble is, that we find not that we are so; *We find sin yet alive and busie in us*, and we find temptations to be very many and strong, and we farther find that we perform all our duties very faintly, and with

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with little comfort or satisfaction to our Souls, and we are not sensible that we grow in grace. We are full of doubts and fears and cannot perswade our selves that we are such as Christ will accept, and these are increased by this, that God often afflicteth us, and seemeth to be angry with us, and not to bear our prayers, whilst he giveth not that strength to serve him, nor comfort in serving him which we pray for. And for these things we find no rest to our Souls

Here is indeed a sad complaint, but the best of it is, it usually cometh from a good heart, and few thus complain but they who have least cause to complain: and the worst of it is, that we hear it no oftner, and there be too few that come to such a sense of their own unworthiness and weakness, and so restless a desire of pleasing God by their subjection to Christ. How few, among all those who are so full of daily complaints, find we complaining of their want of grace and goodness, or of their own deceitfull hearts, or of the little rest their sins give them? What a welcome task would it be to the Ministers of Christ to be always preparing or administering Cordials to

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clear up those that are going with what speed they can towards *Christ*, though they feel their own weakness and some faintings by the way? To be alway engaged in comforting, would be a comfortable work indeed. But, alas, *Christ's* Ministers have too little of this; their greatest and hardest task is to awake those that are asleep, and to perfwade them to rise and come out of bed, when their houses are all on a flame round about them: their almost constant work is to disturb that rest and quiet which *Satan* and themselves do make; and though they do, as they are bid, to this purpose, *lift up their voices like a trumpet*, sound the alarm daily to warn them of the approaching danger, though they reprove never so sharply and cuttingly, to bring them to some sense and feeling, that they may be found in the faith, yet how few can they get so much as to open their eyes, and see either their danger or the way to escape it? So that whensoever the subject before them, would lead them to speak comfort to the *disconsolate Christian*, they are checked by their own fears least they should labour in vain, and speak to

no body; so few can they find who seem by the sense and sorrow they shew for sin, to need a comforter.

§. VII. However if happily there be but one of a thousand from whom their sense of sin forceth out such a complaint, or whose modesty alloweth them not so to attempt their own ease and satisfaction by a seasonable discovery of their troubles with the true ground of them to the guides of their Souls, it is very fit they should not want that portion which properly belongs unto them: therefore unto them is said that which here followeth.

1. Let such as thus complain take heed that they do not deceive themselves in their present case, but that they be really such as they pretend. See that you be weary of sin indeed, and quite out of love with it. When you say you would do any thing, or suffer any thing, and even die to be freed from it, see that you be in good earnest, and that by sin you mean all sin, and then a very great part of your work is done, whether you think it so or not. But be sure that there be no little(as you may

may esteem it ) bosome sin that you yet retain an affection for. There is often some such lurking sin, which men are not willing to see or acknowledge to be so, much less can think it needfull to mortifie, which standeth in their way to comfort. *All these things have I kept from my youth up, said that confident young man to Christ, but yet there was one thing, and that a very considerable one lacking, which kept him from Christ, Luke 18. 22. and he went away sorrowfull, rather than have his Saviour on such terms ; he would be without him, though with sorrow rather than have that one thing with him.* See then if there be not a proud Spirit to be taken down, a lustfull or an envious eye to be plucked out, a griping hand to be cut off, a prating, backbiting, censorious, or some way over busie tongue to be tamed, or something of like nature in the way ; too much pride or curiosity, too much worldliness, or too little self-denial, or love to enemies ; too little care of doing all the good that might be done, and unwillingness to sell all and give to the poor, want of a through humiliation and self-abasement,

so that God seeth cause to humble you yet more, and not to give you any rest or comfort in your selves, least you should give over the search into your own hearts too soon, and suffer some sin to live and reign. Search narrowly therefore, and see if there be not some ~~bitter~~ herb suffered to grow, which marreth the relish of all you receive from God, and do to God. Be very impartial with your selves in this particular.

2. See that in good earnest you have intirely, and without any secret reservation, *resigned* your selves to Christ. See that you be indeed gone from home, and out of your selves, to come unto Christ; that you are become so wholly his, that you are no longer *your own* any farther than you have his leave; that his will be your will, and that all your inquiry is this, *Lord what will thou have me to do?* That you do not go about to make terms of your own with Christ, but thankfully accept of his. Christ must either be acknowledged an absolute sovereign, or you cannot enjoy the privileges of his subjects. His will must be your law, and there must need no more but the manifestation of it

it to create the strongest obligation : Your consent is required as a duty, and you may chuse indeed whether you will consent or not, but it is at your peril, and a partial consent, will be interpreted to be none. Let there be therefore such an absolute resignation of your selves unto him, that you be content to be wholly at his disposal, let him do what he will with you in this world, to want your own will, and whatever you naturally most love, if he say you shall. If then you can be satisfied to know his command and do it, without asking questions what you shall in this life gain or lose by it ; and be so well pleased with his ordering all the affairs of the world, that whether it seem to your advantage or disadvantage, you conclude all is well and for the best, thus you behave your selves as *Christians*. It is mens failing in this main point and *resigning by halves* unto Christ, that createth them most of their trouble, and God seeth it good to exercise them and hold them under the rod, till they learn this lesson more perfectly. But now if you find upon the impartial examination of your own hearts, that

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you cherish no beloved sin, nor indulge your self in the omission of any known duty, and that you have absolutely and unreservedly given your selves up to *Christ*, and willingly trust all your concerns to him, resting fully satisfied with all that ever he doth: then

3. You must also consider where you yet are, and what the condition of the best will be in this life. Though all this be really done by you, yet it is still done but imperfectly, and cannot be otherwise whilst we are in the way, and we see and know but in part. And as we shall easily find this to be true, so we must learn also, that the blessings promised by *Christ* and hoped for by us, are really sure, and shall be performed in due time, and yet not all at once, and by what degrees in this life we are uncertain, and must leave it to him that hath promised. *God* hath not any where promised to turn *earth* into *heaven* for us, nor to give us the perfection of blessedness before we die; and whilst we are in a state of imperfection we must want something. And therefore, as you must take heed that you fail not in your duty wilfully, and yet

yet must not be discouraged with the sense of some imperfection in duty : so you must also take heed you distrust not the promises, nor be out of hope because they are not yet completely performed.

¶. VIII. The original of most of those troubles of mind wherewith sincere Christians are afflicted arise from one of these mistakes. *Either they imagine God requireth more at their hands than he doth require, or else that he promiseth more than he doth indeed promise.*

1. Many timorous Souls are apt to think that God requireth much more of them than indeed he doth ; and then finding how far they fall short of what they suppose is required, they conclude their condition very desperate, and can find no comfort or rest. But this we should learn to understand, that there is much more due to God from man, than God is now pleased indispensibly to require of man ; or, that God will accept of a great deal less than is his due. There can be no less due to God than a *perfect obedience*, nor are we to abate our selves any thing of it in our endeavours, we must do all we can to render unto God the whole honour due unto his name.

Yet is God pleased in consideration of the merits of his *Son* to accept of much less than this, and maketh many abatements in his acceptance, which we are not to make in our endeavours. As we are *men* the law of works given to our father *Adam* sheweth us our duty, and we are not to disown it. As we are *sinners* we are under an impossibility to fulfill it, and for that without a Saviour miserable ; but as we are *Christians* and adopted the Children of God in the *second Adam Jesus Christ*, we are under a law of grace, and a pardon is offered for our transgression of that first law upon condition of faith in *Christ*, on this we may safely rely, as long as the *spirit* is *willing* though the *flesh* be *weak*. The imperfection therefore of duty must never discourage us, so long as we find in our selves that sincerity of heart, which is now acceptable through *Jesus Christ*. To him we must come, that's a duty which will never be dispensed with, for the omission of this there can be no pardon, except we could find another *Saviour* and another *Gospel*. And in the ways that he hath shewn us we must walk even unto the end : But here's our

comfort, that whilst we walk *willingly* and *resolvedly*, though there be much *halting*, yea and some *fallings* too, yet we may come safe to our journeys end, and find a joyfull welcome in the end. We must necessarily come unto *Christ*, we must be as carefull as we can that we fall not into any sin, we must put forth all the strength we have to walk uprightly in every duty, we must use all the means that *Christ* hath ordained to strengthen our selves more, and this is that which is now required: but if, notwithstanding all our endeavours, we are weak, and halt, and sometimes fall, yet rise again and go on with what care and speed we can, all will be well in the end and *Christ* will give us rest.

2. Many *mistaken Christians* suppose that *God* hath promised that which he hath not promised, or they do not understand the terms of his promises: and when they miss what upon a mistake of *God's* promises they expected to find, and yet believe that *God* is faithfull and will certainly perform all that he hath promised, they refuse to be comforted, concluding that the promises do not belong to them, and that they do not perform

the conditions on which the promise as to its fulfilling depends. Thus *Rest* is promised to all that *come unto Christ*, or *believe* in him, and they mistaking the nature of this *rest*, and not finding such a *rest* as they expected, conclude against themselves, that they are no *believers*. Now you ought to consider, that though *rest* be promised, and though it shall certainly be given, as it is promised to all true *believers*, yet is it not all kinds of *rest*, nor to be given all at once, nor to be enjoyed always, nor at all times alike. You must allow God to perform his promise in what measure, by what degrees, after what manner, and at what time it seemeth best to him, and must make your selves sure of this, that he will fully make good his word, and all that wait with patience to the end shall find it so, and this should satisfie.

§. IX. That this may be applied to your case, consider what it is that you complain of.

1. You say you find *sin alive and busie in you*, and because of this you have no *rest*; and because you have not a total *rest* from *sin*, you are not come to *Christ*. But where do

do you find, either, *first*, that *God* doth now expect, that either you or any man else should be without sin, or that he hath promised that by coming unto *Christ* you should in this life have such a rest from all sin? Or where hath *Christ* promised that sin shall no longer live in you, or living, that it shall not be busie and work in you? Now if it be in you and work, it is your duty to feel it, and to be humbled by it, and to fight against it, did you not so, you were in a worse condition, without all spiritual life, dead in trespasses and sins; and if you do so, it must disturb your rest. The *law of innocence* commandeth to be without sin, and finding you are not so, it must make you appear vile in your own sight. The *law of grace* commandeth that you be not servants to sin, and such you are not, so long as you do not willingly obey it: *His servants ye are whom ye obey*, Rom 6: 16. Whilst the flesh liveth, the lusts of the flesh will in some measure live too, yea and war in our members against the spirit. Whilst it liveth in us, it is displeasing to God, and therefore must it be heavy to us. It is indeed the work of Grace to mor-

titie these fleshly lusts, to weaken them daily more and more and keep them under, that they get not the mastery, nor rule over us. But they will not be quite dead till we die, and the more burdensome the sense of them is now to us, the more must we labour to subdue them, and to starve them out by withdrawing their food and nourishment, *making no provision for them*, Rom. 13. ult. *Let us not obey sin in the lusts thereof*, Rom. 6. 12. But mistake not the rest that you have here by Christ, it is not a rest from the *strugglings* of sin, but from the *dominion* of it; not from its working in us, but from our drudging for it, from *yielding our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin*, v. 13. We are at rest from serving it, not from resisting it; and we cannot expect to rest wholly whilst we have such a busie enemy to resist. *He that is born of God indeed sinneth not*, 1 John 5. 18. Yieldeth not gently to it, but maketh strong resistance against it. See then that it win not the heart, nor inthrone it self there, but as an hated tyrant usurping the right of your legal prince oppose it to the death, and you are safe.

1. You say in the next place, that you are assaulted with strong temptations and can have little rest or quiet for them. Hath Christ promised that when you are once Christians there shall be no more any Devil to tempt you, any world for him to tempt you with, any flesh to be tempted? Or hath he any where made it the Christian's duty to be free from temptations, or intimated, that all Satan's temptations shall be charged upon you as your sin? Was Christ himself free from temptations, the strongest temptations? Or was he less innocent because he was so tempted of the devil? And having been tempted, doth he not know how to pity and succour those that are tempted?

Heb. 2. 18. He was tempted like as we are yet without sin, Heb. 4. 15. And having vanquished the Tempter himself, hath promised to make a way for us to escape, I Cor. 10. 13. He hath bid us do as he did, and hath encouraged us with a promise of like success. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you, Jam. 4. 7. He hath told us how to defend our selves against him with an impenitable shield, even the shield of faith wherewith he may be able to quench all the

*fiery darts of the wicked*, Eph. 6. 16. The devils malice against you is as great as ever ; and the better you are, the more will his malice increase, and be sure the more malicious he is against you, the more he will bestir himself to vex and ruine you. Malice is busie and active to its power. But his power is cut short and you have

1 Cor. 12. 9. a promise of *more Grace*,  
Jam. 4. 6. He can do less;

and you can do more. It is not becoming you to stand complaining of a weakned adversary, when you may have strength and assistance enough for the victory. The serpents head is bruised, but he is not quite killed as yet, nor always chained up. Yield not to him, dispute not with him, tell him in short, *thus it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serve*, and then say boldly in the name of Christ, *get thee hence Satan, and you are safe.*

3. But yet you go heavily and drowsily after Christ, all your duties are done with much dulness, your prayers and devotions are cold, flat and lifeless, and your affections are low and sluggish. It is very pos-

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sible, if you be a *Christian* indeed, your *humility* and mean thoughts of your selves and all your performances, may make you judge amiss of your selves. *Humility* is a grace which maketh a man little and vile in his own eyes, and unable to see that in himself which other men often do, and *God* always feeth and liketh. But suppose it be in part as you say : It is a fault and imperfection, which, when discerned, must humble you more, and make you strive with all your might to amend it. Stand not therefore complaining of it, but confessing it to *God*, and discovering it to such as you think best able to direct you, follow good directions, and pray for a blessing, and do your endeavour, and wait upon *God* for what you find wanting. Find out, if you can possibly what is the cause of all this, and do your best to remove it. It may be some indisposition and distemper of body, which a skilfull *Physician* may help you to correct and remove, and if it cannot be help'd, your comfort must be that you find your *spirit* willing though your *flesh* be weak. Matt. 26. 41. It may be too great cares and throng of worldly businesses oppress your Soul

Soul and clog it too much when it should more vigorously ascend towards *God*; if so, complain not without cause where the remedy is in your hand, cast off all care and business that is superfluous, and that which *God* hath by his providence made needfull and your duty will not much trouble you; do all things that are your duty to doe with a good conscience towards *God* and towards men, and the testimony of your conscience in so doing will not damp but quicken your devotions. It may be you stand poring too much upon your sins and infirmities, and fixing your eye continually on the dark side of your self, you overlook the graces wherewith *God* hath adorned you. You think too little on *God's* goodness, and the blessings which you have already received, and considering onely what you see to humble you, and to mourn for, forget what you have to rejoice in, and to praise *God* for. Think not that sorrow for sin is your principal duty, but it is to make way for rejoicing. The sense of your own vileness, is to make you set a just value upon *Christ*, and the mercy *God* offereth you in him. Think that unthankfulness to *God* for what you have,

is as displeasing to him, as *not sorrowing* for what you have done amiss. Think but as justly of God as gracious and reconciled to penitent sinners in his *Son*, as you think truly of your own sinfulness and demerits, and both the sense of your own needs, and the sight of God's goodness will inspirit your devotions. It may be you strive by the length of your devotions to out-doe your strength ; and if so, you must abate, a short and fervent prayer sent from an heart inflamed with love, and zealous of God's honour is always acceptable unto God. It may be you have been taught to prize too highly the devotion of the *Eye and Tongue*, and think that onely the copious pouing out of many words and warm expressions, such as when heard by yourselves awake your affections, and so heat them as to distill tears from your eyes, is hearty praying. This indeed is *good* in some, in others very *deceitfull*, and however not *necessary* in all. When devotion beginneth rationally at the heart, and it is the true and genuine warmth which proceedeth thence, that kindly heateth the affections, and moveth both the tongue and eye, 'tis very good. But the

the lamentableness of the tone, and sad words, and tragical expressions may work a more violent commotion of the affections in some natures, and make them cozen themselves with a *scenical* devotion, and think themselves wholly turn'd into piety, whilst the heart is still as carnal as ever. A good heart is not always befriended with a tender and passionate constitution, nor a glib tongue and nimble expressions; it hath often sighs and groans which it cannot utter, and can go as readily to God another way, as through the mouth and eye. In short, when these naturally follow the heart and come kindly as its attendants they are welcome, when they go without it they are odious, and if they must be forced, they are vain and useleſs. See therefore to this, that you labour to recompence the coldness of affection, with the sincerity of resolution. Convince yourselves that it is your indispensible duty to honour *God* in such a way as he hath commanded as well as ever you can, and deliberately fix your resolution so to doe, and call upon *God* to assist you. With this resolution and real purpose of heart, set upon every duty, and do it with all

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your might ; finding and acknowledging your own weaknesses, and beseeching God to give more strength, trust to his acceptance through *Jesus Christ*. Rational conviction with a deliberate resolution produce an even, calm and lasting devotion which is not consumed by its own heats, but is a reasonable service acceptable to God : When a violent motion of the affections with much heat of spirit and abundance of tears, as it may suddenly rise, so it may as suddenly vanish ; like a dashing shower or a flash of lightning, neither of which tend towards Heaven. Let this be your satisfaction, that your will is wholly resolved for Christ, and carrieth all your endeavours the same way.

4. Yet you say, *that you grow but slowly in grace and goodness, and make little progress in the ways of God.* If it be so indeed, it is not well, and you must mend your pace. But it may be you grow more than you discern, and another can see it when you cannot. In bodily stature a Man perceiveth not how he groweth, but at length he may be convinced he is grown. Our spiritual growth is much more hard to be discerned by our selves :

selves: and though it be our duty to grow, yet is it not our duty always to see it. He that is in a Boat or Coach may not perceive himself to move forward, when they that stand by can see that he moveth apace, and in the end himself will find it so. As you grow in the true knowledge of God and *your selves*, you will always have higher thoughts of God and lower of *your selves*, and this is a part of your spiritual growth, in one of the most excellent Christian graces, *humility*. The more you discover Christ's excellency, and your own need of him, your very longing desire of enjoying him fully, which is your very growth in *love* the principal grace, will make you think you have done just nothing, till you be perfected by him. The less you knew of God, the less you knew both of your duty and your sin, and the more you now know of your duty and sin, the greater you think your distance from God. Your ignorance made you confident, your knowledge abateth that confidence by discovering your wants. Think not then so much of what you have not done, as to discourage you from doing what you ought to doe. Press the more earnest-

earnestly forward that you may attain to what you want. He that runneth in a race must not waste his time in always looking behind him to see how far he hath run, but must put forward and make haste to come up to the Goal. Do but go on as fast as you can, and you will find in the end you are come home. Use now with all diligence the means of growth, feed heartily on the bread of life, drink freely of the waters of comfort, exercise constantly in the paths of righteousness, get into a wholesome air where the fresh gales and showers from Heaven may light upon you. And shunning the empty husks of sin and vanity, which nourish not, but poison or corrupt; and taking your due rest from the cares and drudgeries of the world, though you now discern it not, you will at last find you are grown up as high as Heaven.

§. But still you are perplexed with fears and doubts, and how should these consist with rest, or that assurance which you are told there is in saving faith? First, be warned not to indulge too much to your fears and doubts, or to feed them with too much musing on your past life or your present sins; whereby you both render

render your lives uncomfortable to your selves, rob God of his cheerfull service, and your Souls of the sweetnes of all holy duties, and also lay a stumbling block in the way of others, who by seeing such as you so much disquieted in your selves, are affrighted from entring upon the Religion you profess, looking upon it as a melancholy and distracting thing. But if you cannot drive away all such fears and doubts, yet are you not rashly to conclude so ill of your selves, as to think you have no faith. Remember what you have been told, that *the faith which justifieth, is an hearty embracing of, and compliance with the Gospel of Christ, as the rule of your life, and the way to Salvation.* Walk then according to it, and be confident that Christ will be the Saviour of all that do so. And this is the assurance you should have. Your business is to see that you thus come unto Christ in the way which he in his Gospel hath commanded you to walk in, and then you are to leaye it to Christ to doe his own work, and to give you what he hath promised as he shall please. So long as you doubt not of his sufficiency and faithfulness, but, though this doubt should sometimes arise

rise in you, yet you labour to remove it, and do so overcome it, that you verily believe that *God* will for *Christ's* sake have mercy on all that obey his *Gospel*, and believing this you make it the very business of your lives to obey it, you are safe enough, and have that *Faith* which is necessary to *Salvation*, though it do not yet fully satisfie your selves, but you doubt of the sincerity of it. For this is onely to doubt of your own faithfulness to *God*, and not of *God's* faithfulness in making good his word to you. If this doubting of your own faith bring you not to a wretched carelessness, so that you grow remiss in serving *God* because you despair of serving him acceptably; if on the other hand it excite you to a greater care and diligence to make your calling and election sure, all's well, though not so well as you could wish.

And thus also for your *fears*, Where there is a possibility of sinning, there is room for fear, yea even for fear of eternal damnation. But this fear may be either moderate or immoderate; and accordingly is to be dealt with. The moderate fear of eternal punishment is a thing that we ought not so much as to desire

desire to be without in this life, it is an affection which God hath given us to keep us cautious and a loof off from danger, and to keep us in the way to Salvation ; and Hell is prepared, not that we should suffer in it, but prevent those sufferings by fearing it. Christ himself hath warned us, *to fear him that can cast into Hell*, Luk. 12. 5. We must fear it, that we may not venture to deserve it, *but standing, take heed least we fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. The immoderate fear, is that which so daunts and disheartens us, so disquiets and distracts the Soul, that it cannot go on with any cheerfulness in the ways of God, having always a dismal expectation of wrath, and leaving too little or no room for hope to act in. When a man feareth all his Religion is to no purpose, and that God is always angry with him. *Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling*, saith the Apostle, Phil. 2. 12. That's your duty but do not so exceedingly fear and tremble, as to let your work fall out of your hands, or not to be able to go about it that will be your loss. *A promise being left of entring into his rest, take heed or fear lest any of us come short of it*, Heb. 4. 1. that's

that's the way to have it. But if we be so fearfull as not to venture for it, we must come short of it.

6. Lastly, you say, God layeth many heavy afflictions upon you, and why would he deal so severely with you, if he were not angry and displeased with you? But remember you your duty, and let God alone to order his Family. If you behave your selves dutifullly as his Children, you may be sure he is in Christ Jesus the Son of his love your gracious and reconciled Father. *There is no condemnation for you if you be in Christ Jesus,* Rom. 8. 1. *Being justified by faith you have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. 5. 1. The great weight of sin is taken off, so that it shall not sink you to Hell, and will not that satisfie you unless God will also strew your way to Heaven with roses? Is the eternal inheritance of so little value, that it is not worth a few sufferings? Christ hath redeemed you from the wrath of a provoked God, but not from the rod of a loving Father correcting for sin. He hath delivered you from the torments of Rebels and the death of Traitors, not from the chastisement of Sons; from the unquenchable fiery furnace,

ace, but not certainly from the *fiery trial* of afflictions. He hath assured you of the victory, but not from being wounded. It may be your lot to enter into *Canaan* through the *red Sea* of your own bloud, to go into Heaven through much tribulation, but what was a shower of stones to St. *Stephen*, when he saw Heaven open before him? *Christ* hath made your way to God *passable*, is not that enough, except he *smooth* it for you too? The Kingdom o Heaven is opened unto all believers, and so much rest shall they all have by the way, as is enough to refresh their spirits, to recruit their strength, to enable them to struggle through all oppositions to that exceeding weight of glory, to which all these sufferings are not worthy to be compared, or compared, should seem light. Yea, all these things work together for your good, they do but bow you down and humble you at the feet of *Jesus*, in a fit posture to receive the Crown of life at his hand. Call to mind then, that God dealeth with you as with his beloved Children, he whippeth you up out of your beds of sloth, that you may finish your journey before death benight you; he correcteth you that

that he may make you good and do you good. *Lazarus* had a great load of evils in this life, such as laid him at the rich Man's gate and moved the very Dogs to pity ; but God had ready for him an eternal rest in *Abraham's* bosom, where he that would not believe him must envy him, *Luk. 16*. Do not then so undervalue your rest in Heaven in the presence of God, as to be dejected for want of a little rest from short afflictions here. But learn by the grievousness of these, as you now feel and account them, what a value to set upon that love and the effects of it, those *sufferings* of your blessed *Jesus* whereby he hath redeemed you from the torments of eternal fire.

Let us now dispute no longer with our selves, but set our hearts at rest in the God of our Salvation : let us come with all joy and cheerfulness, and cast our selves into the loving imbraces of our blessed *Jesus*, who alone can and will bring us to his *Father* and our *Father*, his God and our God, with whom we shall for ever be, and in whom we shall enjoy an endless Sabbath : We shall rest from our labours, and our works shall follow us. Amen.

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